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ABSTRACT

The Equipped for the Future (EFF) framework describes adult performance along these four dimensions: structure of the knowledge-base; fluency of performance; independence of performance; and range of conditions for performance. When completed it will include a developmental sequence of descriptions of learner performance for each EFF standard; model performance-based assessments and scoring guidelines for each standard; and provide materials, training, and technical assistance that will enrich the National Reporting System (NRS) educational functioning levels and support valid and reliable measures of educational gain by using standardized performance assessments. During year one the following were accomplished: (1) more than 100 teachers in 5 states were trained in developing instruction and assessing performance on the EFF standards; (2) a set of instructional and documentation tools that help teachers embed assessment in on-going instruction were developed; (3) more than 300 teacher-generated performance tasks for 10 EFF standards were collected; and (4) performance tasks and descriptions of adult learner performances on these tasks were analyzed to create draft performance continua for 5 standards. The EFF/NRS project has promoted professional development by enabling practitioners to build knowledge and skills in teaching with standards; create and use learning activities with embedded assessment; and observe, document, and interpret learner performance. The project has led to a strong foundation for adult education system reform and improvement through strengthened capacity for accountability. (Appendices include background documents; assessment, tools, and templates; and reporting.) (MO)

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EQUIPPED FOR THE FUTURE ASSESSMENT REPORT

EFF/NRS Data Collection Project, 2000–2001

An Interim Report on the Development of the EFF Assessment Framework

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Executive Summary

The Equipped for the Future/National Reporting System (EFF/NRS) Data Collection Project is a multiyear national project jointly funded by the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) and the U.S. Department of Education (USED). It was developed to create strong linkages between the Equipped for the Future (EFF) Standards and the National Reporting System (NRS), which was established by the USED's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) to meet accountability provisions for Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

The goal of the project is to enable programs using Equipped for the Future as a framework for instruction to report student progress from level to level on the National Reporting System. Specific outcomes for the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project include being able to

- identify EFF Performance Tasks that represent the knowledge and skills necessary for transition from one NRS level to the next for up to 10 EFF Standards,
- make sure that transition tasks identified for each EFF Standard are appropriate for ABE (adult and basic education) and ESL (English as a second language) learners, and
- develop a rich body of performance descriptors for each NRS level for each EFF Standard. These can be used to validate and enrich the existing body of level descriptors so that they are robust enough to support a standardized approach to assessment and reporting.

The project is being conducted in partnership with five states: Maine, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, and Washington. These states have supported the participation of local programs as research sites in exchange for technical assistance from EFF, including training in the use of products, tools, and procedures that support valid and reliable measures of educational gain using standardized performance assessments.

Now in its second year, the project is the National Institute for Literacy's primary vehicle for assuring that the EFF Assessment Framework is aligned with actual student performance as well as with cognitive science research on cognition, learning, and the development of expertise.

The EFF Assessment Framework

The Equipped for the Future Assessment Framework defines levels of performance and measures of performance on the EFF Content Standards for a variety of assessment purposes. The Framework describes adult performance along four dimensions:

- increasing knowledge, organization, and ability to apply knowledge and strategies (structure of the knowledge-base dimension),

- increasing fluency in performance (fluency of performance dimension),
- increasing independence in performance (independence of performance dimension), and
- ability to perform tasks of increasing complexity under a variety of conditions (range of conditions for performance dimension).

When completed, the EFF Assessment Framework will include

- a developmental sequence of descriptions of learner performance for each of the 16 EFF Standards that can be used to guide learning and instruction;
- model performance-based assessments and scoring guidelines (rubrics) for each EFF Standard that can be used to mark transitions from one level of performance to the next (for at least 6 specified levels to correspond to the current 6 ABE/ASE (adult secondary education) and 6 ESL NRS Educational Functioning Levels); and
- materials, training, and technical assistance to support the implementation of these EFF-based curriculum and instructional resources and assessment tools.

These aspects of the EFF Assessment Framework will enable us to enrich the NRS Educational Functioning Levels and support valid and reliable measures of educational gain by using standardized performance assessments.

This report focuses on achievement of Year One of the joint Data Collection Project, October 2000–October 2001.

Results

During Year One, the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project

- trained more than 100 teachers in 5 states in developing instruction and assessing performance on the EFF Standards,
- developed a set of instructional and documentation tools that help teachers embed assessment in on-going instruction,
- collected more than 300 teacher-generated Performance Tasks for 10 EFF Standards, and
- analyzed Performance Tasks and descriptions of adult learner performances on these tasks to create draft performance continua for 5 Standards.

Through these field research activities, the project constructed draft continua of performance for five EFF Standards: *Read With Understanding, Convey Ideas in Writing, Speak so Others Can Understand, Listen Actively,* and *Use Math to Communicate and Solve Problems.* These research activities also enabled the project to amass preliminary performance data for five additional Standards: *Solve Problems and Make Decisions, Cooperate With Others, Learn Through Research, Take Responsibility for Learning,* and *Use Information and Communications Technology.*

Improving Instruction, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement

The EFF/NRS project serves as an excellent professional development experience for participating practitioners. It enables them to build knowledge and skills in

- teaching with standards;
- creating and using learning activities with embedded assessment; and
- observing, documenting, and interpreting learner performance.

The Data Collection Project has also created a strong foundation for adult education system reform and improvement. The combination of professional development for a cadre of adult educators (who can, in turn, train others) and the development of tools (Performance Tasks and performance

continua) that facilitate use of assessment data in monitoring and improving instructional practices has strengthened the capacity of adult education systems for accountability and continuous improvement.

The promise of accountability leading to educational improvement can be realized when teachers

- recognize the value of monitoring adult student learning,
- have appropriate and practical tools to monitor learning outcomes,
- are able to make use of learner performance data to improve instruction, and
- can accurately assess student progress and report learning gains. When these goals are met, the promise of accountability leading to educational improvement can be realized.

Remaining Challenges

Work on the development of the EFF Assessment Framework has been a complex and challenging endeavor. Our original timeline for developing performance continua for the 16 EFF Standards has had to be revised as we identified more clearly the research, analysis, and validation needed to produce quality results.

At the same time, we have become more aware of the value of the practical tools and professional development provided in the course of our development work. Teacher/researchers who have participated in the project have a better understanding of evidence and of the conditions for assessment—the big picture of assessment. They constitute a core of teachers who are better equipped to provide reliable data on learning outcomes.

These interim results are critical to meeting the broadest goals of the EFF initiative as well as the NRS, which is continuous improvement of the adult education and literacy system. With continued commitment from our field partners and increased interest from other states, we are looking forward to seeing this work through to completion.

Guiding Principles for Developing EFF Assessment Framework

1. The EFF Assessment Framework must address multiple purposes for assessment. The Framework must provide for

- information on learner achievements and mastery that is useful to the learner as well as the teacher throughout the instructional process;
- information about what learners can do that is credible to employers, educational institutions, and policymakers, as well as to learners themselves; and
- information that is useful for program and system improvement and accountability.

2. To address these multiple purposes, the EFF Assessment Framework must support a multidimensional, flexible, and systemic approach to assessment. Teachers and programs will be able to choose from a range of tools, to be identified or developed, that enable them to accurately measure performance against EFF Standards and that are linked to one another so that multiple assessments can provide a rich portrait of learner competence.

3. The EFF Assessment Framework must address learning over a lifetime. Strategies for assessment and credentialing must take into account the fact that adults build skills over time (rather than all at once) in response to changes in their life situations. Certificates and other credentials must be modular, designed to define competence or mastery at a particular point, and within a framework that assumes continuing development of competence as skills, knowledge, and understanding are further developed over time.

4. Since EFF Standards define skills all adults need in order to carry out their roles as workers and as members of families and communities, the EFF Assessment Framework must address a single continuum of performance for all adults—adults with only minimal formal education and those with many years of formal education, including advanced degrees.

5. Each level defined in the EFF Assessment Framework must communicate clearly what an adult at that level can do. Numerical levels don't communicate meaning to external audiences. Grade levels seem to communicate a common picture of performance; but, in fact, the meaning behind the label varies widely from community to community and state to state. Grade levels are particularly misleading when applied to adult performance, since they focus on developmental skill levels that don't match the ways in which adults, with their broader background and range of experience, can combine skills and knowledge to perform effectively in daily life.

6. The levels defined in the EFF Assessment Framework must be explicitly linked to key external measures of competence (e.g., certificates of mastery, NAAL/IAL survey levels, diplomas, and other credentials) **and key pathways** (e.g., entry to higher education and entry to employment as defined by occupational skill standards) **so that adults and systems can rely on them as accurate predictors of real-world performance.**

7. The levels defined in the EFF Assessment Framework must be the product of a national consensus-building process that assures portability of certificates and credentials.

8. Work on the development of this framework must maintain the strong customer focus that has distinguished the EFF Standards development process to date. It must be based on a broad, inclusive definition of maximizing accountability for all activities to all customers, starting with the adult learner.

Introduction

In the summer of 1999, the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) and the Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) of the U.S. Department of Education's (USED) Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) began a series of meetings to discuss how to align work on Equipped for the Future (EFF) Standards with work on the National Reporting System (NRS) being developed to meet reporting requirements on the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). By the following summer, NIFL and DAEL had developed a plan for a joint project intended to create strong linkages between the EFF Standards and the National Reporting System. The goal of the project was to enable programs using Equipped for the Future as a framework for instruction to report student progress from level to level on the NRS. The project would work with states that had chosen not to use an existing standardized instrument to report progress on the NRS by providing technical assistance that included training in the use of products, tools, and procedures that would support valid and reliable measures of educational gain using standardized alternative assessments. Specific outcomes proposed for the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project were to

- identify EFF Performance Tasks that represent the knowledge and skills necessary for transition from one NRS level to the next for up to 10 EFF Standards,
- identify transition tasks for movement between all 6 adult basic education (ABE) levels and all 6 English as a second language (ESL) levels on the National Reporting System for each EFF Standard, and
- develop a rich body of performance descriptors for each NRS level for each EFF Standard. These would be used to validate and enrich the existing body of level descriptors so that they are robust enough to support a standardized approach to assessment and reporting.

This final outcome was of particular importance in assuring a standardized approach to assessment within and across states. The performance level descriptors for the NRS Educational Functioning Levels for ABE and ESL had been designed for illustrative purposes only and are not specific enough to provide a basis for developing alternative assessment tasks and scoring guidelines. However, states that had chosen to give adult education programs an alternative to assessing educational gains using existing standardized test instruments were relying upon these instruments to determine whether students possessed the skills and knowledge necessary to move from one level to another. DAEL entered into partnership with NIFL on the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project because they saw that our

work in collecting data to build performance continua for each EFF standard could result in the research-based construct and research-based level descriptors that would support valid and reliable performance assessment.

The joint EFF/NRS Data Collection Project was launched in October 2000 with funding from DAEL, NIFL, and the five state adult education agencies that have been partners in this data collection effort: Maine, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, and Washington. In October 2001, a second year of the Data Collection Project was funded. This project is the primary vehicle for assuring that the continuum of increasingly skilled performance (described on page 8) constructed for each EFF Standard is aligned with actual student performance as well as with cognitive science research on cognition, learning, and the development of expertise.[1] The project also serves as an excellent professional development vehicle for participating practitioners, enabling them to build knowledge and skills in teaching with standards; creating and using learning activities with embedded assessment; and observing, documenting, and interpreting learner performance.

This report provides an overview of the accomplishments of the first year of the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project.[2] It includes a discussion of

- work carried out from October 2000–September 2001,
- the field research process and the practice-based learning of participants, and
- key lessons and their implications for the NRS.

[1]See John D. Bransford, Ann L. Brown, and Rodney Cockings, Eds. (1999). *How People Learn: Brain, Mind Experience and School.* (Washington DC: National Academy Press); Nadine M. Lambert and Barbara L. McCombs, Eds. (1998). *How Students Learn: Reforming Schools Through Learner-Centered Education* (Washington DC: America Psychological Association); and Jennifer Cromley, *Learning to Think, Learning to Learn: What the Science of Thinking and Learning has to Offer Adult Education* (2000) (Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy).

[2]For the first part of the project year, the work was managed by the Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee, with technical assistance provided by SRI International. In April 2001, a new EFF Assessment Consortium was awarded a contract from NIFL to complete the work of building the EFF Assessment Framework. The Consortium is a partnership between SRI and CLS, guided by a Technical Advisory Group, fully listed in Appendix A.

Background on the Development of the EFF Assessment Framework, 1999–2000

In January 1999, as NIFL/EFF was conducting the third and final field review of the EFF Content Standards, we took the first steps toward developing an assessment framework for the Standards. We began by reviewing analogous efforts in England, Australia, and South Africa. We also commissioned a series of papers focused on issues important to assuring that programs and states could reliably and validly assess and report progress in relation to the EFF Standards. Intended primarily for internal use by the EFF team, these papers included

- a broad look at the issues of developing national assessments and national performance standards by Archie LaPointe of the Educational Testing Service,
- a "road map" for a process for developing performance standards for EFF by Regie Stites of SRI International,
- a review by Michelle Della Rosa of HumRRO and Joan Wills of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) that looked more closely at the construct of each of the EFF Standards, and
- a paper by Sri Ananda of WestED intended to assist teachers in assessing student performance for in-program purposes using the EFF Standards. This paper, *How Instructors Can Support Adult Learners Through Performance-Based Assessment* is the only one prepared for general distribution.

At the same time, we invited our field development partners to work with us to clarify the various purposes a comprehensive assessment system for adult education needs to address[3] and to help us develop a set of Guiding Principles for Developing the EFF Assessment Framework (see page 4). Taken together, our Guiding Principles all pointed to using cognitive science research on the development of expertise as the theoretical underpinning for the EFF Assessment Framework. This research base enabled us to conceptualize a single continuum of increasingly skilled performance that includes all adult performance—from novice to expert. It also provided a starting point for defining a small number of key dimensions that distinguish performances along the continuum.

Defining the EFF Continuum of Performance was the first of three primary tasks toward fully developing the EFF Assessment Framework. The remaining tasks were

- to develop a continuum of performance for each standard, with levels that describe real-world competence and
- to identify and develop tools to assess performance for the range of assessment purposes.

[3]See Appendix B for our Purposes of Assessment chart, adapted from R.J. Mislevy (1994).

Defining the EFF Continuum of Performance

In order to assure that our model of performance reflected real teaching and learning situations, in the spring of 1999, we invited teachers at 10 EFF field development sites, who were already using the Standards to plan and guide instruction, to also document and evaluate learner performance.[4] Teacher reports on learner progress were analyzed by using the research on expertise to clarify which Dimensions of Performance were important to consider in rating how well an individual could use an EFF skill to carry out real-life tasks.

Through this review process, we identified four key dimensions that characterized progress in using a Standard along a continuum.[5] These Dimensions of Performance, validated through data collected by EFF field sites in 1999 and 2000, included the following:

1. Structure of Knowledge Base,
2. Fluency of Performance,
3. Independence of Performance, and
4. Range of Conditions for Performance.[6]

Our initial conception of this continuum was represented by a graphic that showed independence, fluency, and range of performance increasing as the knowledge base deepened (see Figure 1).

Developing a Continuum of Performance for Each EFF Standard

By the end of 1999, we were ready to begin the process of building performance continua based on these four dimensions. Teachers and tutors from 15 field sites in our five partner states used standardized performance templates and a standard data collection reporting protocol to collect and report data on student performance. The protocol guided teachers through a process of using the standards and dimensions to plan and carry out lessons centered on EFF "learning tasks" and to collect evidence of learner performance in relation to these tasks. Each teacher was responsible for reporting on only 2 of the 16 Standards—one Standard from the communication group and one from another group. EFF staff worked with all the sites to make sure that at least three teachers were collecting data on each standard—more in the case of the communication standards.

Review of this first round of data, followed by a midcourse technical assistance meeting with prac-

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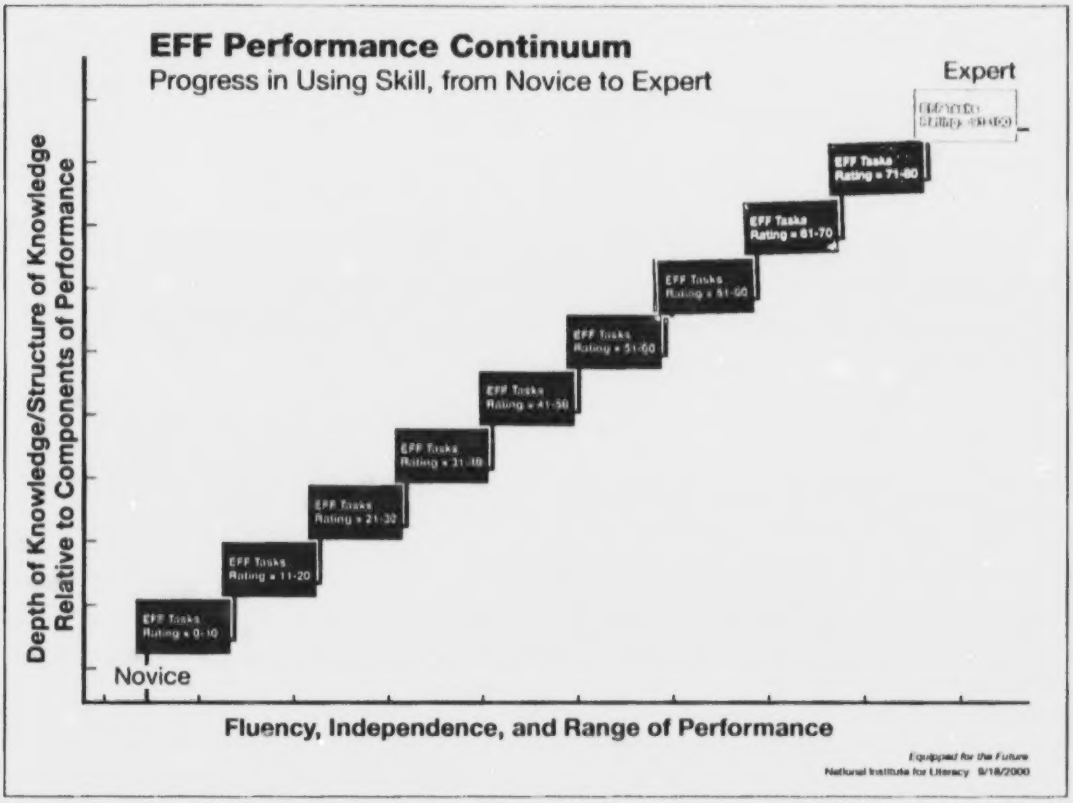
[4]See Sondra G. Stein (2000) *Equipped for the Future Content Standards: What Adults Need to Know and Be Able to Do in the 21st Century.* (Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy), See Appendix B, for a full description of the documentation protocol.

[5]Primary sources were Wittrock and Baker (1988) *Testing and Cognition* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall), Bransford et al., *How People Learn: Brain, Mind Experience and School* (Washington DC: National Academy Press), and a wide range of technical reports from the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) at UCLA.

[6]For more information on the EFF Dimensions see *Equipped for the Future Content Standards* pp. 59-60 and Peggy M McGuire (2000) "A Performance Framework for Teaching and Learning With the Equipped for the Future (EFF) Content Standards," *Adventures in Assessment*, Vol.12, Winter, 2000, pp. 28-43 (Boston: SABES/World Education).

Figure 1. EFF Performance Continuum


EFF Performance Continuum
Progress in Using Skill, from Novice to Expert
Expert
Novice
Depth of Knowledge/Structure of Knowledge Relative to Components of Performance
Fluency, Independence, and Range of Performance
EFF Tasks Rating = 0-10
EFF Tasks Rating = 11-20
EFF Tasks Rating = 21-30
EFF Tasks Rating = 31-40
EFF Tasks Rating = 41-50
EFF Tasks Rating = 51-60
EFF Tasks Rating = 61-70
EFF Tasks Rating = 71-80
Equipped for the Future
National Institute for Literacy 9/18/2000

titioners in the spring of 2000, enabled us to improve the technical quality of our data collection methods in three areas crucial for the work of the current EFF/NRS Data Collection Project:

1. **Sharpening the focus on the "construct" or conceptual model of each EFF Standard.** Data from teachers helped us understand that a well-structured Performance Task must focus equally on the full Standard and on the Dimensions of Performance. In their effort to create tasks that provided opportunities for students to develop along all four dimensions of performance, teachers at first lost focus on the Standard that was the target of their effort. They created interesting, real-world performance tasks, which often did not, in fact, provide evidence of use of the Standard on which they intended to focus. We clarified that the construct for each Standard is composed of the Components of Performance of the Standard (i.e., the full Standard statement) as modified by the four Dimensions of Performance.
2. **Sharpening the distinction between the requirements of a task created to elicit evidence of performance and the descriptions of learner performance on this task.** To help clarify this critical distinction, we worked with our field partners to develop criteria for both defining a *well-structured Performance Task* and generating rich descriptions of learner performance. Placement of a performance-task description on the continuum does not vary from learner to learner and is determined by the complexity and context of the task, including the knowledge required to perform it. The placement of descriptions of

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learner performance on the continuum does vary from learner to learner and is determined by the knowledge, strategies, fluency, and independence demonstrated in performance on a task.

3. **Increasing interrater reliability on the placement of tasks and learner performance on the continuum.** Working through the issues described above gave teachers a set of more objective criteria for deciding where to place tasks and descriptions of learner performance on a continuum. In the mid-course technical assistance meeting, we practiced coming to consensus on placing tasks on the continuum and developed increased ability to judge both tasks and performance in light of explicit, common criteria.

Through this collaborative work with field sites, we refined data collection procedures to assure that teachers and tutors paid close attention to whether the learning tasks they were developing were well structured and that descriptions of learner performance on an EFF Performance Task focused clearly on *how well* a student can use the targeted skill (as defined by the Standard) in carrying out a task. To assure that we were collecting data based on the same construct of a specific Standard, we created templates that provided teachers with a common language for describing tasks and learner performance relative to the four dimensions. These refinements in our data collection practices enabled us to be certain that the data we were collecting could be aggregated to build a valid continuum of performance for that Standard.

By the summer of 2000, the EFF Assessment Team had built a strong foundation for the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project. We had defined the EFF Purposes of Assessment (Appendix B), identified the four Dimensions of Performance upon which to build a cognitive model of adult performance, and begun the process of observing student performance of EFF Standards by using a performance framework and template based on these four dimensions. We had revised our data collection protocols based on feedback from our partner teachers/researchers, and we had prepared a guide for EFF field researchers that focused much more clearly on the importance of basing EFF performance data on *well-structured Performance Tasks*. The rich body of data and data collection tools we had developed prepared us to create a partnership with the Division of Adult Education and Literacy of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education and to continue the process of building the continua with the clear intention of aligning the EFF assessment system with the U.S. Department of Education's National Reporting System.

Overview of the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project, Year One

The scope of work for the first year of the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project was ambitious: Use student performance data collected by practitioners to build a continuum of performance for up to 10 of the 16 EFF Standards in order to provide research-based performance descriptors to enrich NRS level descriptors. We planned to build each continuum by arraying descriptions of real-life applications of the knowledge and skills embedded in a standard from a beginning level toward developing expertise. We would then use this performance data to create behavioral descriptors that would be aligned with levels on the NRS. In this way we could "anchor" these key NRS transition points (or levels) along an EFF Standard continuum. The 10 Standards that were jointly identified as important to focus on first were: *Read With Understanding, Convey Ideas in Writing, Speak so Others Can Understand, Listen Actively, Use Math to Solve Problems and Communicate, Solve Problems and Make Decisions, Cooperate With Others, Take Responsibility for Learning, Learn Through Research,* and *Use Information and Communications Technology.*

This work was carried out in collaboration with the same five state agency partners engaged in earlier data collection work. All expressed a strong interest in working with us to integrate EFF Standards into assessment procedures that can be used for reporting to the U.S. Department of Education. Twenty-four field sites were identified by the state adult education offices in Ohio, Oregon, Maine, Tennessee, and Washington according to criteria developed by NIFL/DAEL. These field sites represent a broad spectrum of adult education students and providers. They include Even Start, family literacy, and workplace literacy programs in a wide range of learning sites, including school-based centers, community-based organizations, and community colleges. They also include adult basic education (ABE) and English as a second language (ESL) students who participate in instruction at all six ABE and all six ESL levels of the NRS. The state agency partners supported (both financially and programmatically) the participation of more than 80 teachers in these programs. Funding from NIFL and DAEL covered all expenses associated with training and technical assistance, which included two national meetings and meetings in each state. In order to build in-state capacity on assessment issues, we decided to use these resources to train and support a part-time field assistant in each state rather than expand our own staff. Over time, the field assistants assumed increasing responsibility for pro-

viding on-going technical assistance to field sites.

The timetable for Year One included

- initial training,
- three data reporting periods,
- a midcourse meeting,
- a data analysis period from June to August to construct the draft standards—specific performance continua, and
- a final national meeting in September for the research teams to review and validate the draft continua.

Teacher and Program Administrator Agreements

Each participating teacher agreed to prepare and submit a total of six data reports, using a common protocol and reporting form on two Standards. Each report described in detail an EFF Performance Task; four of the reports also documented the performance of at least three students on the task. Program administrators agreed to convene regular meetings of their program research team for the purpose of discussing task "ratings" and descriptions of student performance and to provide support for teachers who were often trying out a very different approach to teaching than they had been accustomed to using. Program administrators reported quarterly on their observations of changes in teaching patterns, student learning, and overall impact of EFF field research on their program. (See Appendix A for the detailed timeline of project activities and a sample agreement form that was signed by all participants.)

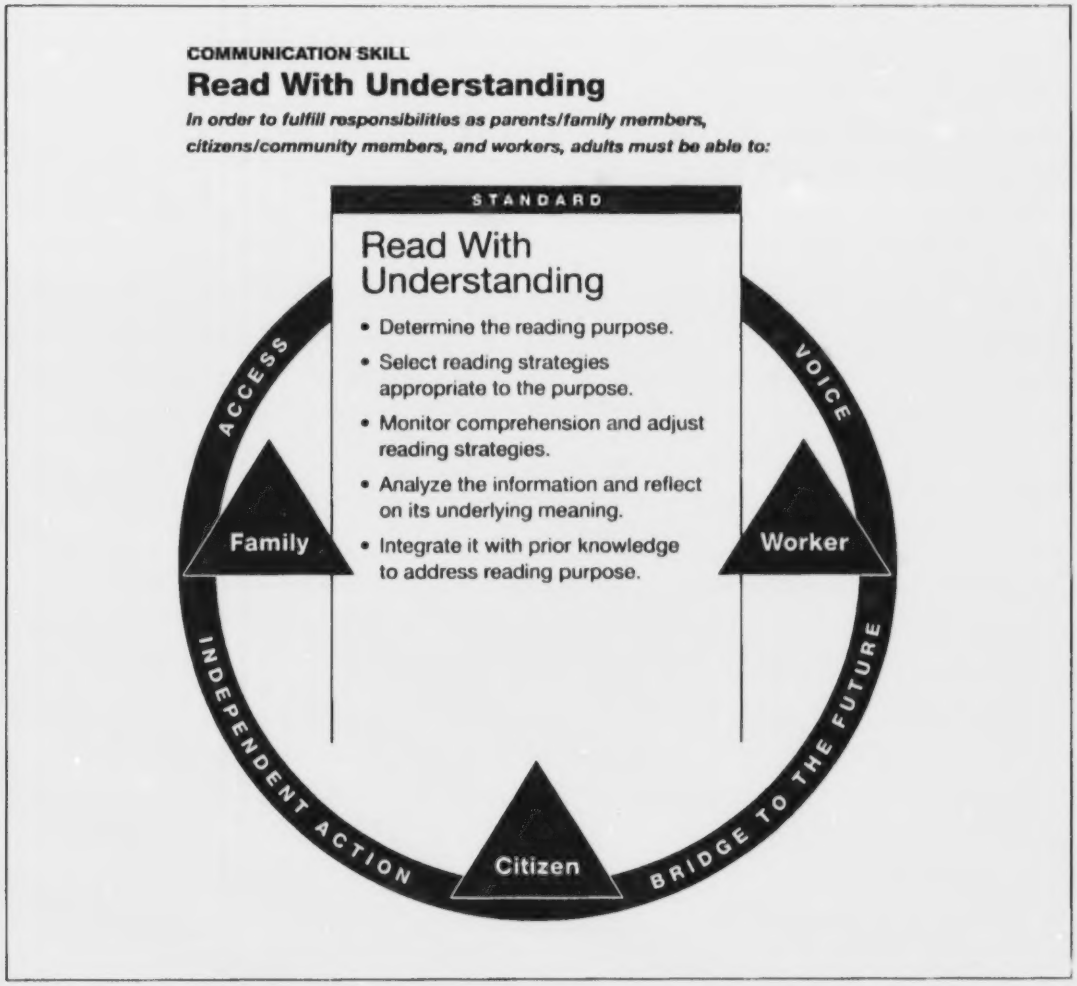
October–December 2000: The First Reporting Period

For the first 2 months, teachers worked on writing and analyzing performance tasks that met the criteria for a well-structured task. These tasks were reviewed by the field assistants and revised by teachers. Many teachers used these performance tasks with students, but we did not ask them to document student performance at this time. After having identified the importance of well-structured tasks to building a valid continuum of performance for each Standard, we kept the focus squarely on building teacher capacity to develop well-structured performance tasks.

January–June 2001

During the two subsequent reporting periods (ending in April and June), teachers developed additional tasks and, using the performance template as a guide, placed descriptions of learner performance at points along the continuum of developing expertise. These descriptions were submitted electronically to the Center for Literacy Studies, the Consortium partner that manages the data archives. (See Appendix C for a copy of the reporting form).

For example, to collect evidence of student performance of the Standard *Read With Understanding*, teachers created performance tasks that incorporated all of the components of this standard and represented one instance of meaningful, real-world use of *Read With Understanding* for students in their classes. They analyzed these tasks along the four dimensions and placed the task descriptions at the appropriate point along the continuum of increasing complexity, using the tools described in Section 3, Training, Technical Assistance, and Practice-Based Learning in the Field Development Process. Student performance of these tasks was then described in detail and placed along the continuum, defined by the four dimension, of developing a knowledge base and increasing fluency, range, and independence. An example of a performance task and a description of


COMMUNICATION SKILL
Read With Understanding
In order to fulfill responsibilities as parents/family members, citizens/community members, and workers, adults must be able to:
STANDARD
Read With Understanding
• Determine the reading purpose.
• Select reading strategies appropriate to the purpose.
• Monitor comprehension and adjust reading strategies.
• Analyze the information and reflect on its underlying meaning.
• Integrate it with prior knowledge to address reading purpose.
ACCESS
VOICE
Family
Worker
INDEPENDENT ACTION
BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE
Citizen

student performance following the reporting protocol are found in Appendix C.

July–September 2001

By the end of the data collection period, the project staff had received between 12 and 34 data reports for each of the ten standards for which we were collecting performance data. Staff and field assistants reviewed and analyzed all data and worked in small groups to begin to create draft standard-specific performance templates for the standards on which the NRS focuses: *Read With Understanding, Convey Ideas in Writing, Listen Actively, Speak So Others Can Understand*, and *Use Math to Solve Problems and Communicate.*

Four of these continua and the data templates from which they were developed were analyzed at an end-of-project national meeting of field development partners (including state agency representatives, program administrators, and teachers) in September 2001. Due to the events of September 11, not all project participants were able to participate in this review, so the review period was extended. At a national meeting held in early November to initiate the next phase of data collection, field development partners had the opportunity to review

versions of the continua that incorporated recommendations from the September meeting.

October 2001–September 2002: Year-Two Plans

These standard-specific performance continua are being prepared for technical review by expert panels in early 2002. During the 3-day review process, panelists with a variety of backgrounds and expertise (in teaching, subject matter, assessment, and policy) will engage in a systematic review of the performance data and level descriptions, using guidelines adapted from accepted procedures developed for establishing performance levels for performance assessments. Panelists will make suggestions for revisions to the levels of the performance continuum and for revisions to the assessment task specifications.

By September 2002, we will have EFF performance-level descriptors for five Standards and performance-level indicators for the NRS Educational Functioning Levels. In the fall of 2002, we will convene an assessment task development institute that will make use of the revised performance continua for these five Standards and develop model assessment tasks that can be used for assessing performance on the Standards for accountability purposes. During the winter and spring of 2002–2003, we intend to conduct pilot studies of the use of model assessment tasks for reporting educational gains on the NRS. During this same time period, 2002–2003, we will be reviewing and revising the performance continua for the next group of standards. By the spring of 2004, we intend to have a range of performance assessment products available for policymakers and practitioners. This projected timetable through 2004 is included in Appendix A.

In the following section, we describe the data collection process for this first year of the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project (October 2000–September 2001) in more detail through an explanation of the tools that were used to collect the data and the processes in which teachers engaged.

Training, Technical Assistance, and Practice-Based Learning in the Field Development Process

From the beginning, the aim of the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project was to develop products, tools, and procedures that would enrich the NRS Educational Functioning Level descriptions and that would support valid and reliable measures of educational gain using standardized alternative assessments. For states that have chosen to give adult education programs an alternative to assessing educational gains with existing standardized test instruments, the currently available qualitative descriptions of levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities in the NRS Educational Functioning Levels are not specific enough to provide a basis for developing alternative assessment tasks and scoring guidelines. Recognizing that the current descriptors were not designed to be used for assessment purposes, USED/DAEL and NIFL jointly sponsored the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project as a means of collecting and analyzing adult learner performance data that could be used to create more specific and detailed qualitative descriptors for each NRS skill area. The expected outcomes of the joint project were enriched performance-level descriptors and a set of performance assessment tasks that could be used to mark the transition from level to level on the NRS.

Beyond these specific expected outcomes, there were several additional benefits expected from the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project. Among these expected benefits are the possibilities of developing tools for measuring educational gains that are more sensitive to smaller increments of change and more closely aligned with adult learner and adult education program goals than those found in currently available standardized tests. Also, as adult education moved to the more rigorous accountability requirements of the AEFLA (Title II, WIA), there was wide concern that insufficient training in assessment procedures used by practitioners in the field would lead to problems in the validity and reliability of the educational gains data required for accountability. DAEL and NIFL believed that the considerable training and technical assistance that was part of the EFF field-based research procedures would result in the states in which we are working in a cadre of practitioners more experienced in assessment. Moreover, it was believed that the EFF field-based research would produce a set of tools that would assist other practitioners and other states in putting into place a more rigorous approach to assessment and reporting.

Teacher/researchers in the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project received training and tools to help develop their expertise in the specific tasks required for the research process by

- constructing a performance task that targeted one of the EFF Standards and that was appropriately challenging for the students' skill levels,
- developing a clear and detailed picture (understanding) of the knowledge base required to per-

form the task so that the task could be used as a guide for instruction as well as an opportunity to collect evidence of performance,

- constructing tools to collect evidence of student performance on the task in relation to the four Dimensions of Performance, and
- developing descriptions of student performance, relative to the four dimensions, that were sufficiently detailed to enable multiple practitioners to reach agreement on where to place the performance on a continuum of such performances.

In order to assist practitioners in collecting and reporting the kind of rich and useful data that we would need to gather in the proposed research process and in response to what we learned about that process from the practitioners along the way, we developed several tools. Below, we describe these tools in more detail, explaining why we developed them and how teachers used them in the data collection process. A copy of each form or tool is found in Appendix B. The tools include

- a performance template, which is an array of increasingly complex generic descriptors of performance along all four dimensions;
- a definition of an EFF Performance Task and a graphic that embeds the Performance Task in the teaching and learning process;
- a task template consisting of an array of increasingly complex generic descriptors for the knowledge that a task requires and for the conditions of performance of the task to assist teachers in rating the objective complexity of the task;
- a Performance Task Worksheet to guide teachers through the process of creating and analyzing a performance task;
- a set of criteria for well-constructed performance tasks; and
- teacher and student observation forms.

The Performance Template: A Key Tool for Building the Performance Continuum

The Guiding Principles for the EFF Assessment Framework called for a single continuum of performance for all adults. In envisioning such a continuum, we drew on our knowledge of research on adult cognition and learning. We wanted to build a "continuum" for each EFF standard that represented a rich developmental picture of adult applied knowledge and skills—a picture that included all adults, that encompassed a lifetime of learning, and that articulated learning as movement from novice to expert performance. Our work on the NRS/EFF Data Collection Project focuses only on that part of each continuum that represents the performance of adults participating in the current adult literacy/basic education/ESL system and aims to ensure that each continuum reflects what adult performance really looks like in the classrooms and instructional settings of that system.

The EFF Performance Template was the starting point for using field data to construct a developmental performance continuum based on the four dimensions. It provided teachers—researchers with a set of research-based generic criteria to guide and standardize the process of placing detailed observations of ABE and ESL learner performance at appropriate points along a developmental performance continuum from novice to expert. The Performance Template is organized around three observation categories—Knowledge Base, consisting of what learners know; Performance, including both fluency and independence; and Range, describing the kind and number of tasks and contexts—that reflect the four dimensions (see Figure 2).

Performance descriptions keyed to these observation categories were presented in 10 consecutive

Figure 2. EFF Performance Template Questions

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPING THE EFF ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK	
DIMENSIONS OF PERFORMANCE	
Knowledge Base *What do learners know?*	1. What vocabulary do learners have related to the skill? Related to the subject area? 2. What content knowledge do learners have related to the skill? Related to the subject area? 3. What strategies do learners have for organizing and applying content knowledge? • Can learners recognize or create new relationships or connections? • Can learners identify information that is important to the task, problem, or both? • Can learners understand when information or concepts apply?
Performance *How well can learners perform, including both fluency and independence?*	1. How fluently can learners perform? • How much effort is required? • How consistently do learners start and finish when getting to the desired outcome? • How well are barriers controlled or overcome? 2. How independently can the learners perform? • How much help is needed from others? • How much initiative is shown in getting started? • How often do learners generate their own strategies to complete the task?
Range *What kind and number of tasks can they perform and in what context?*	1. What kinds of tasks do learners carry out? • How complex is the task? • How many different kinds of tasks can learners perform? 2. In what contexts can learners perform? • In what kinds of circumstances can learners perform? • In how many different situations can learners perform?

(relative but not absolute) ranges, in part so we could look closely at performance in 10-point ranges from 0–60. By focusing on the 0–60 range, we were able to obtain richly detailed descriptions of adult learner performance at the levels covered by adult literacy/ABE/GED/ESL programs and described in the six ABE and six ESL Educational Functioning Levels of the NRS. The descriptions on the template were devised as generic "markers" that describe increments of growth; they focus on changes in key features on each dimension and will be revised, expanded, and further specified for each Standard, based on teacher documentation.

A More Comprehensive Picture of Learner Abilities

Teachers tell us that using the EFF Performance Template was initially challenging; its language sometimes seemed vague and repetitive (an inevitable consequence of its generic nature and the incremental change that it suggested along the continuum), and it took a lot of time to document performance from so many "angles." As they became more experienced in using the template, however, they came to appreciate how it allowed them to see a much more comprehensive picture of their learners' abilities than they had before. They used it as a guide to what prior knowledge they should take into account as well as what new knowledge and skills for which they should look—what specific behaviors to identify—when they assessed learner performance. Meanwhile, the data that they provided by using the template allowed us to refine and expand the descriptors in each range.

Midway through the year, the template was restructured in response to feedback from ESL teachers. They requested "more room" for rich descriptions at the 0–20 ranges in order to take into account everything that some ESL learners (particu-

larly those who are not literate in their native languages) need to learn to accomplish tasks in this range. Two new columns were added in the 0–20 range through all dimensions. These are still relative "placeholders" and not absolute ranges, but they are meant to allow for more "granular" description at lower points on the continuum.

"The performance template helps me to know that there's more involved than watching them do the task or reading their completed assignment. I now can identify such areas as how well they perform, at what rate, and with how many mistakes, etc."

"Looking back into my past teaching years, I realize that I have been teaching and assessing real-life activity lessons in the classroom, just not under the title of 'Performance Task.' What is new is the use of the template or rubrics to do a more holistic assessment. I find this to be a much better method of assessment because you see the student's abilities in many different angles. I still do 'traditional' methods of teaching and assessment, such as grammar, pronunciation, spelling, dictation, etc., but I see them now as pre-performance-readiness activities."

Definition of an EFF Performance Task: Targeting the Standard

Building the continuum for each Standard required reliable data on the performance of each EFF Standard. To make sure that activities being documented by teachers—researchers squarely focused on the full Standard (including all of the Components of Performance)—we asked teachers to observe and document learner performance of a particular Standard in what we termed "well-structured EFF Performance Tasks." We offered the following definition: "A well-structured EFF Performance Task is a learning activity that meets learners' purposes and addresses all components of an EFF Standard. It represents a real-world, adult use of the targeted Standard that can be analyzed according to the four Dimensions of Performance."

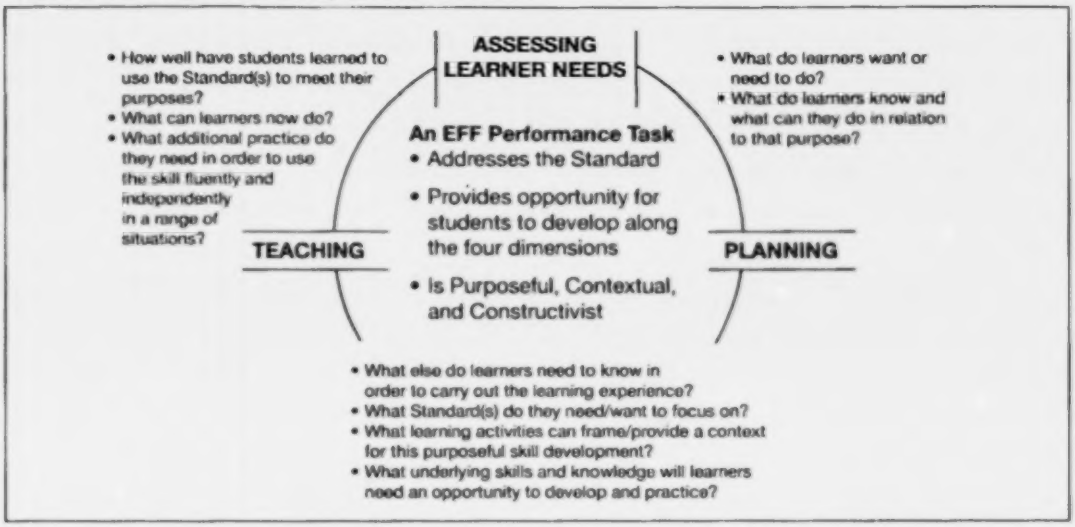
A Set of Criteria for Well-Structured Performance Tasks

In Chapter 3 of the Field Guide,[7] developed for teacher/researchers as an orientation and preparation for the 2000–2001 field research, we articulated four criteria for defining and rating well-structured EFF Performance Tasks. These criteria, the basis for the worksheet described below, were clarified and revised during a midcourse meeting in February 2001 of representatives from all field research sites.

The revised Criteria for a Well-Structured Performance Task read as follows:

- The EFF Standards represent the knowledge and skills adults need to achieve important purposes in their lives. A well-structured performance task represents one instance of a meaningful use of the standard.
- A well-structured performance task identifies the evidence that will be used to determine how well the standard was used to carry out the task.
- A well-structured performance task is defined specifically enough so that knowledge-base requirements are clear.
- A well-structured performance task sufficiently focuses on the targeted standard and its components of performance so that performance can be rated.
- A well-structured performance task has immediate use or high transfer value for the learner.

Figure 3. Teaching and Learning With EFF Standards


ASSESSING LEARNER NEEDS
• How well have students learned to use the Standard(s) to meet their purposes?
• What can learners now do?
• What additional practice do they need in order to use the skill fluently and independently in a range of situations?
• What do learners want or need to do?
• What do learners know and what can they do in relation to that purpose?
An EFF Performance Task
• Addresses the Standard
• Provides opportunity for students to develop along the four dimensions
• Is Purposeful, Contextual, and Constructivist
TEACHING
PLANNING
• What else do learners need to know in order to carry out the learning experience?
• What Standard(s) do they need/want to focus on?
• What learning activities can frame/provide a context for this purposeful skill development?
• What underlying skills and knowledge will learners need an opportunity to develop and practice?

As teachers used these criteria to develop and implement performance tasks, they found that doing so had important implications for how they planned and actually carried out instruction, as well as for how they observed and documented learner performance. Many reported that their learners were responding in positive and powerful ways to these changes in how they approached teaching. For example, as teachers involved learners more in planning learning activities, they found themselves stepping more into the role of facilitating learning. They noted that learners responded positively to the opportunity to participate more actively in their own learning and to the opportunities performance tasks afforded to contextualize skill development in activities they found to be meaningful and important.

"I don't spend as much time as before in front of the class 'teaching' vocabulary or whatever; the students spend more time now applying their learning in real-life applications. I now spend more time and energy thinking about and developing tasks that will be meaningful for the students. The students seem to understand that important indications of their learning happens during their performance of these EFF tasks. They want to include these EFF artifacts in their portfolios as examples of their best work."

Embedding Assessment in the Teaching and Learning Process

A key learning throughout the process of developing and documenting performance tasks was about the nature and role of assessment: Who does it, how, and when or at what points can we look for evidence of learning? Planning and implementing performance tasks that were meaningful to learners, rigorous in their application of the full Standard, and, therefore, effective in producing useful performance data, required teachers to think about and "embed" assessment through all the steps of the planning, teaching, and learning cycle. The performance task development process further encouraged teachers to devise multiple strategies for eliciting evidence of learning at various points in the teaching/learning experience. Those were often innovative, performance-based strategies that included learner dialogue, reflection, and self-monitoring. Based on this learning, we developed a new tool for teacher/researchers to use as they constructed more performance tasks. This new tool is in the form of a graphical representation of how a well-structured performance task informs all aspects of the planning, teaching, and assessing cycle (see Figure 3).

"In this learning process, the students were full participants. The students were motivated to do the task because the task was real to them and relevant to their lives. The students made connections between the subject matter and how to use the subject in their lives instead of thinking that school is 'stuff' they learn in school and will never use again. As a teacher, this type of teaching was creative, exciting, and individualistic. I was more of a facilitator in the process than usual. It was different than the way I usually teach because each student could apply the lesson to themselves and their lives."

"Though ESL teachers inherently know that time is critical for mastering language, we get caught up in deadlines and progress testing and imposed or perceived curriculum demands. Creating a well-structured, step-by-step process for students to get to their final writing piece (contrasting past, present, and future English learning) made this learning activity easy for the students and for me. Once they got started, it seemed there was no stopping them. And yet I worried that it was taking too much time. I wondered if the increased fluency that I saw had to do with the topic, the process, or both."

"My teaching has become very focused. The performance task has been integrated into the lessons and curriculum, but my emphasis is always on the performance of the specific task. Starting with the task and working backwards in the lesson-planning process is opposite of the way I used to plan and teach. Formerly, I would choose a theme or unit (that may or may not have been chosen by the students) that I felt was important. Then I would develop a scope and sequence. Tasks would be teased out along the way as they developed. Emphasis would be placed where students needed help. There was never really any real product or end performance except for the GED test. The EFF Framework has changed my approach. It is useful in that most students become involved. They like having a concrete task toward which they are working."

The EFF Performance Task Template

Teacher/researchers not only developed and implemented well-structured EFF Performance Tasks, they were also describing and rating the "objective difficulty" of those tasks. Rating Performance Tasks along a continuum of increasing complexity helped teachers be sure that

- the proposed tasks were appropriately challenging (not too easy or too difficult) for learners at a given "level,"
- they could think about what learners already knew and could do that would contribute to successful completion of the proposed tasks,
- they could define what more the learners needed to know and be able to do in order to successfully perform the tasks and how much or what kinds of "scaffolding" might need to be built in to activities, and
- they would have a sound basis of comparison for documenting learner performance of the task.

To assist practitioners in this process, we developed a Task Template, adapted from the structure, content, and theoretical foundations of the Performance Template. The Task Template focuses on six ranges of complexity, contexts, and knowledge-base requirements for proposed tasks, and the template supports users in richly describing and consistently rating their tasks for these characteristics. In the task example found in Appendix C, the teacher used the task template to guide her detailed descriptions of the requirements of a task that involved reading the classified ads to find affordable and suitable housing.

"Our [team] conversations are usually centered on helping one another see the relative difficulty of the task and rating it on the Task Template, based only on the task's difficulty rather than on how well our particular students may be able to perform. Having the other ESL, Even Start, and ABE instructors involved in our group is useful in allowing us to bounce ideas around and to ensure that the task is being rated on the difficulty for all students, not just our own."

The worksheet for developing a well-structured performance task is very helpful—but I work backwards through it. By the time I finish, I have a clear task and better plans for the lessons leading to the task. After [the project midcourse meeting] I have a much better idea of how to write the tasks. Now that a 'clear, succinct task' is the goal, I feel I have a better teaching objective and a better means for measuring student achievement."

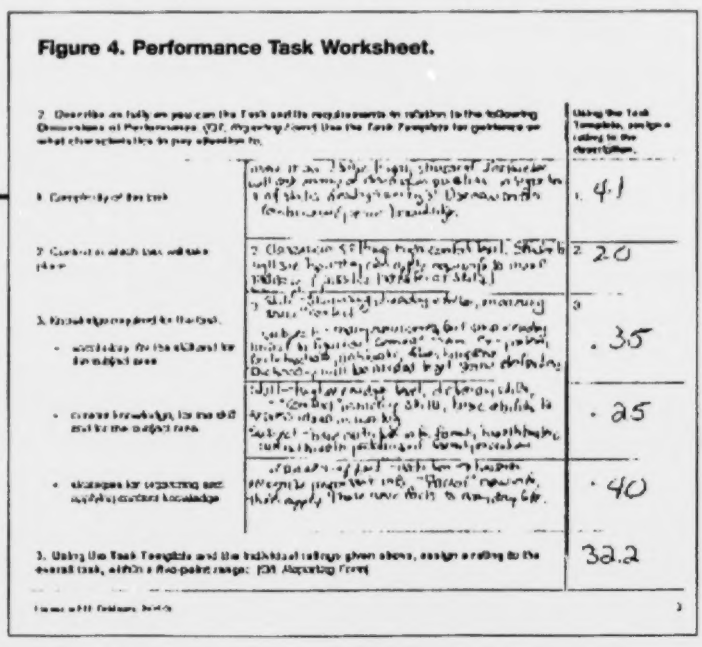
"In developing this task, the things that were the most helpful were integrating the Standard into the task, looking at the student's purpose for wanting to improve in this skill area, and working with other staff members to develop the task. Student interest and need to work on the concept of cooperation in the worker role acted as a guide for developing this task."

Performance Task Worksheet: Targeting Instruction to Student Need

As can be imagined, the process of going back and forth between the Standard and the Dimensions of Performance as described in the generic task template in order to develop a well-structured Performance Task was complicated. To help teachers think clearly about the structural requirements of their tasks, and to provide a way to keep track of their notes, a worksheet (Figure 4) was developed that mirrored the questions found on the Data Reporting Form, with additional prompts to make sure that the task was fully analyzed and rated.

During the first reporting period (October–December 2001), teachers forwarded a completed worksheet to their field assistant, who reviewed the task analysis and gave feedback on ways to sharpen the focus on the standard. Later, with more experience under their belts, teachers did not need to use this worksheet; but many continued to do so, finding it to be a useful way to develop a complete and well-structured Performance Task. They noted that using the worksheet helped them feel surer that the tasks they developed were appropriate to

Figure 4. Performance Task Worksheet.



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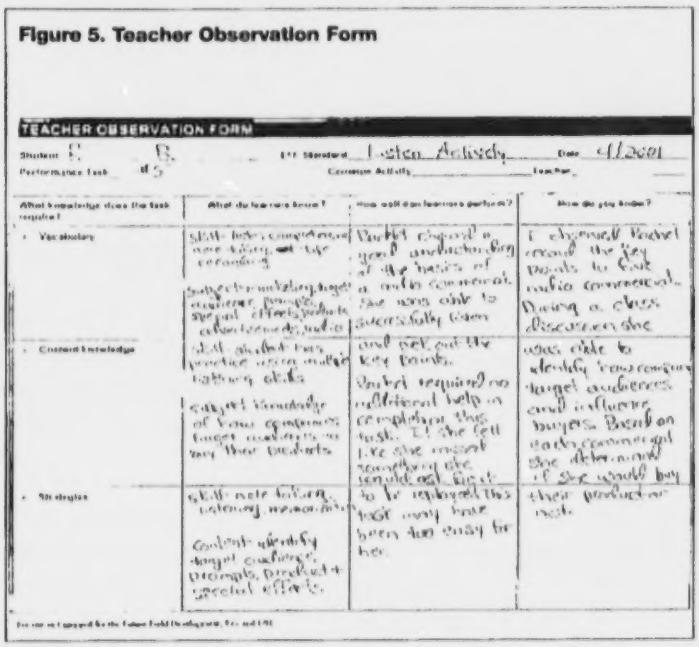
the needs and skill levels of their learners. Further, the focus on careful planning that using the worksheet required paid off in more sharply focused, better organized teaching. When teachers/researchers turned to documenting student performance of tasks, we added another set of questions to the Performance Task Worksheet to provide the same opportunity to think clearly about the performance that the task may elicit and the evidence that the teacher would use to document student performance.

Figure 5. Teacher Observation Form



TEACHER OBSERVATION FORM

Student: B. B. — Performance Task: #5 — Lit Standard: Listen Activity — Date: 4/12/01 — Common Activity: _____ — Teacher: _____

What knowledge does the task require?	What do learners know?	How well can learners perform?	How do you know?
• Vocabulary	Still has comprehension difficulties at the recording	Needed support & guidance with the basics of a radio commercial. She was able to successfully listen	I observed Rachel record the key words in the radio commercial. During a class discussion she
• Content knowledge	Did not demonstrate mastery skills Limited knowledge of how sentences target audience in her products	And not get the key points. Rachel required multisensory help in completing this task. If she felt like she missed something she would ask first	was able to identify two consumer target audiences and influence buyers. Based on each commercial she determined if she would buy these products or not.
• Strategies	Still note taking, listening memorization Content identify target audience, prompts, product + special effects	To be replayed this task may have been too easy for her.	

"The difficult part is trying to make sure that all of the prior knowledge, vocabulary, and understanding are there in order to accomplish the task. The most challenging part for me is to create a task that is not too difficult for my beginning literacy students, yet challenging for the high-level students who are all in the same class."

"My teaching becomes very focused when I'm doing the tasks. The whole process of developing the task carries over to lesson planning and helps me to be more organized. It's not that I wasn't organized before, it's just that the focusing is easier. The 'performance task' way of teaching is starting to appear spontaneously in my teaching, even teaching that is not specifically related to the performance tasks for this project."

Teacher Observation and Student Documentation Forms

As part of the initial training and support offered to participants in the 1999-2000 phase of this field development process, we outlined detailed, step-by-step procedures for data collection and reporting. Since we knew the burden of observing and documenting performance would be considerable, we urged teachers to build plenty of time into their instructional activities for them to reflect with their learners on skills being developed and tasks being accomplished in the teaching/learning process. We also encouraged them to set aside time at least once each week to document growth and change in extensive detail so that the resulting data would be useful in building a continuum of performance.

To support the process of teacher observation and student reflection, we developed a tool that focuses teachers' written observations around the dimension-related questions found on the generic Performance Continuum (which, themselves, approximated a set of observation protocols). The EFF Performance Observation Worksheet (Figure 5) structured teacher observations of performance as answers to four questions aligned to the four Dimensions of Performance:

1. What kinds of tasks can learners carry out (range)?
2. In what contexts can learners perform (range)?
3. What do learners know (knowledge base)?

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4. How well can learners perform (fluency/independence)?

In response to teacher requests, a shortened version of the form was made available for students to use to document their own learning (Figure 6).

This tool proved to be a valued resource to many teachers for diagnostic and instructional purposes, and it was used again during 2000–2001 data collection. It helped teachers to organize their observation notes in a way that made it easier to compile relevant information over time and then transfer that information to the Teacher Observation Form. Since the forms were completed at the time of observation or shortly thereafter, we found that they provided a great source of rich and detailed descriptions of performance.

"Planning and teaching for EFF performance tasks is enjoyable: I like the process, and the students seem to like it, as well. Observing student performance is one thing, but recording it is something that is going to take more practice, and it is very difficult to accomplish during the actual student performance. There are so many things going on during class that it may be helpful to have someone else do an objective recording of the process. Having a video or audio recording when evaluating performance would be helpful. Providing some free time immediately after each performance would also allow for some reflection and review of the process, an opportunity to fill in voids, and enable a more accurate evaluation of student performance. However, I'm not sure how these needs could be met."

Figure 6. Student Documentation Form

STUDENT DOCUMENTATION FORM FOR EFF STANDARDS

Your Name WM F Standard _____ Date 5/16/01

PERFORMANCE TASK _____ Common Activity _____

What knowledge does the task require?	What do you know?	How well can you perform?	How do you know?
• Vocabulary tradition, customs, history, idioms, terms, usual, occasion, regular, culture, consist • Content using internet, asking questions, use a dictionary • Strategies Plan and organize research questionnaire, proof read	traditions, customs, culture, occasion how to use the internet, how to ask questions, know how to use dictionary I can plan & organize, I have list of questions	This project made a lot of work. It will challenge my ability to deal with people, ask questions, use the computer and be creative. This will help me organize my thoughts. Through pictures that I send my teacher to check my grammar & give the chance to in short stuff and	I will not organize the questionnaire & give them to some people who celebrate the event. I need your feedback on how they do it. I can watch it in real life and we did it.

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Implications of Year-One Work for Enriching the Educational Functioning Levels of the National Reporting System

During Year One, the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project conducted extensive field research that resulted in draft continua of performance for five EFF Standards: *Read With Understanding, Convey Ideas in Writing, Speak so Others Can Understand, Listen Actively, and Use Math to Communicate and Solve Problems.* In addition, teacher/researchers collected performance data for five additional Standards: *Use Information and Communications Technology, Learn Through Research, Take Responsibility for Learning, Solve Problems and Make Decisions,* and *Cooperate With Others.* Specifically, the Project

- trained more than 100 teachers in 5 states in developing instruction and assessing performance on the EFF Standards,
- developed a set of instructional and documentation tools that help teachers embed assessment in on-going instruction,
- collected more than 300 teacher-generated performance tasks for 10 EFF Standards, and
- analyzed performance tasks and descriptions of adult learner performances on these tasks to create draft performance continua for 5 Standards.

The data collected by the field researchers, using the tools described in the previous section, helped define the constructs and rich level descriptors that contribute to the completion of the EFF Assessment Framework, which will include

- a developmental sequence of descriptions of learner performance on the Knowledge Base, Fluency, Independence, and Range dimensions of the EFF Performance Continuum for each of the 16 EFF Standards that can be used to guide learning and instruction;
- model performance-based assessments and scoring guidelines (rubrics), based on the Performance Continuum for each EFF Standard, that can be used to mark transitions from one level of performance to the next (for at least six specified levels to correspond to the current six ABE/ASE and six ESL NRS Educational Functioning Levels); and
- materials, training, and technical assistance to support the implementation of these EFF-based curriculum and instructional resources and assessment tools.

These elements of the EFF Assessment Framework provide a basis for enriching the NRS Educational Functioning Levels and for supporting valid and reliable measures of educational gain, using standardized alternative assessments by specifying characteristics of assessment tasks that can be used to collect and evaluate evidence of adult performance at various levels on the EFF Standards.

Defining Levels of Performance

As in any educational assessment, the number of levels of performance specified and the definition of boundaries between levels is a matter of subjective judgment and consensus. There is no "measurement magic" that can reveal the "true" levels of adult performance. However, this does not mean that levels of performance on the EFF Standards cannot be marked in an empirically grounded and procedurally rigorous way. Through careful and recursive analysis of field-generated learner performance data and broad-based field and content expert review of level descriptions resulting from this analysis, we can construct a set of level descriptors for adult performance on the EFF Standards that can, in turn, be used to guide the development of assessment tools and scoring guidelines for reporting educational gains in the NRS. In this way, the EFF Assessment Framework will extend the range of assessment options available to adult education programs in measuring and reporting educational gains in the NRS.

The levels of adult performance that are marked out in the EFF Assessment Framework will be determined on both empirical/theoretical and practical grounds. The empirical/theoretical bases for determining levels of performance (and for developing specifications for performance assessments and scoring guidelines to benchmark levels of performance) consist of the field-based research and development processes described in the earlier sections of this report plus the content expert review, stakeholder review, and validation processes being conducted by the EFF Assessment Consortium. The practical grounds for determining levels of adult performance on the EFF Standards has its basis in the conventional system of levels of instruction into which students in the adult education and literacy system are placed. The NRS levels (6 for ABE/ASE and 6 for ESL) reflect this conventional and institutional division of levels of achievement for students in the adult education and literacy system. The data gathered through the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project has come from adult education programs and from students who are classified within levels (courses of instruction) that correspond to the NRS Educational Functioning Levels.

By looking carefully at the characteristics of performance tasks and at the range of learner performances on tasks by adult students at different program levels corresponding to the NRS levels, we can create a rich picture of stages of learning and development on the EFF Standards that can be mapped onto the conventional levels of achievement reflected in student placement and in the NRS Educational Functioning Levels. In this way, we hope to provide a nuanced and explicit framework for development and selection of assessment tasks and for scoring and reporting student performance on the EFF Standards that will be instructionally relevant and, at the same time, reliable and generalizable enough (because it is linked to an explicit continuum of adult performance and to clear specifications for tasks and for scoring performance at points along the continuum) for use for high-stakes program improvement and accountability purposes.

Strengthening Instruction, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement

The EFF/NRS Data Collection Project has also created a strong foundation for adult education system reform and improvement. The combination of professional development for a cadre of adult educators (who can, in turn, train others) and the development of tools (performance tasks and performance con-

tinua) that facilitate use of assessment data in monitoring and improving instructional practices has strengthened the capacity of adult education systems for accountability and continuous improvement. When teachers recognize the value of monitoring adult student learning, when they have appropriate and practical tools to monitor learning outcomes, when they are able to make use of learner performance data to improve instruction, and when they can accurately assess student progress and report learning gains, the promise of accountability leading to educational improvement can be realized.

Work on the development of the EFF Assessment Framework has been a complex and challenging endeavor. We have found that our original timeline for developing performance continua for the 16 EFF Standards has had to be revised as we identified more clearly the research, analysis, and validation needed to produce quality results. At the same time, we have become more aware of the value of the practical tools and professional development provided in the course of our development work. Through our experience in working with teacher/researchers in developing assessment tools and in providing professional development in assessment, we have seen that teachers have a better understanding of evidence and of the conditions for assessment, of the big picture of assessment, resulting in a group of teachers who are better equipped to provide reliable data on learning outcomes. These interim results are critical to meeting the broadest goals of the EFF initiative as well as the NRS: continuous improvement of the adult education and literacy system. With continued commitment from our field partners and increased interest from other states, we are looking forward to seeing this work through to completion.

Practitioners at EFF field research sites say that using EFF Performance Tasks to document student performance is influencing what happens in the classroom. Administrators and teachers tell us that teachers are

- thinking more about students' prior knowledge—what they bring to the learning environment from their previous experience—and planning in ways that will build on this prior knowledge;
- engaging students in thinking about their own learning processes—thinking about thinking—or metacognition;
- discussing cognitive and metacognitive strategies and their (teachers') need for more professional development in this area;
- thinking ahead in their lesson planning (What evidence of student performance do I expect to see from this activity? How will it be documented? What is the role of my students in helping develop the criteria for the evidence?);
- continually asking oneself if the activity is transferable and if it has real-life meaning; and
- focusing on the teaching process rather than on the product—or, put another way, facilitating student learning rather than teaching the "right answers."

(Summarized from Ohio teacher reports, 2000–2001.)

APPENDIX A
Background Documents

EFF/NRS Data Collection Project Timetable, 2000–2001

EFF Assessment Framework: Timetable for Processes and Products, 2000–2004

EFF Assessment Consortium Staff, Technical Advisory Group and Field Development Partners

Participant Responsibilities and Agreement Forms

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors, National Reporting System

EFF/NRS Data Collection Project Timetable 2000-01

DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS
August **2000**	Letters and applications sent to state directors	Ohio, Oregon, Maine, Tennessee and Washington committed funds and began to identify from 3 to 6 programs per state to participate.
September	1. Sites identified 2. State field assistants identified 3. Field site training schedule established 4. Training materials and data collection protocols prepared	1. 20 sites, 20 administrators, 88 teachers 2. Maine: Janet Smith; Ohio: Kathy Petrek and Sharon Katterheinrich; Oregon: Joan Benz; Tennessee: Aaron Kohring; Washington: Joan Allen. 3. In-state training sessions scheduled for October and early November. 4. Guide to the EFF/NRS Data Collection Project prepared. Notebook included four chapters on developing and rating performance tasks and observing and documenting student performance; data reporting forms, worksheets and templates for rating tasks and performance.
October	Five 2-day training sessions conducted • Oct 9-11: Washington • Oct 11-13: Oregon • Oct 18-20: Ohio • Oct 24-26: Tennessee • Oct 31-Nov 2: Maine	• In each state, participants included all site teachers and program administrators; representatives from state adult education agency staff. • Training was conducted by Peggy McGuire and Brenda Bell, with assistance from the state field assistant, following a common agenda that focused on constructing performance tasks, as the vehicle for observing and documenting student performance.
November	Data collection and technical assistance process started	Practitioner-researchers completed preliminary worksheets for performance tasks; submitted to field assistants for review; received feedback.
December	Continued technical assistance End of 1st reporting period, December 31	• Field assistants visited each site or held conference calls with the research team at each site. • First round of data reports on performance tasks submitted electronically. 128 reports received on 10 standards. 20 reports received from administrators, describing the impacts of participation in this project on the team and program at large.
January **2001**	Data review	EFF Assessment Team met to review data reports; identify needed corrections to protocols; and plan national mid-course meeting content.
February	National mid-course meeting, February 4-6	• Over 100 teachers, administrators and state agency staff met in Washington, DC for three days to examine data on performance tasks, refine criteria for well-structured tasks, and prepare for submitting data on learner performance. • Based on recommendations of participants, staff prepared a series of memos and revised the data collection form.

EFF/NRS Data Collection Project Timetable 2000-01

DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS
February 2001, cont.	Technical assistance to the field assistants	• Staff provided on-going education and technical assistants to the practitioners who are serving as field assistants. This process began in October and is on-going.
February-March	Observations of student performance	• Using performance tasks developed specifically to allow observation of performance on a standard in relation to the four dimensions of performance, teachers began documenting student performance.** • Field assistants held regular telephone or in-person meetings with program teams.
April	1. In-state technical assistance meetings held	1. Prior to the end of the second reporting period, in-state joint meetings of all field sites were conducted by the field assistants, with participation by McGuire or Bell, to provide additional technical assistance and clarification on reporting procedures.
	2. End of second reporting period	2. From mid April to the end of the month, the second round of reports were submitted, accompanied by artifacts showing evidence of student performance. 110 data reports received. (Several teachers have either moved or not involved due to health or life changes).
April-May	Technical assistance continued	Project staff and technical advisors began a series of data review telephone conferences, to identify strengths and potential problems in the data, and to provide guidance to field assistants in giving feedback to practitioner-researchers. Regular telephone conferences with field assistants were held, to review the same data sets. Field assistants held regular telephone or in-person visits with field site teams.
June	Data Analysis	Data from first two reporting periods prepared for use at July data analysis meeting.
July-August	Data analysis and construction of draft continua of performance for these standards: *Read with Understanding, Convey Ideas in Writing, Listen Actively* and *Speak So Others Can Understand*	The EFF Assessment Consortium and field assistants met July 9-13, to begin the continua construction process, using data from field reports. The team practiced the behavioral anchoring process that will be used by the technical judging panels. Work continued through the end of August to finalize the standard-specific data templates and draft continua. Materials were prepared for review at the final project meeting.
September	Final project meeting, September 12-15, Portland, Oregon	Participants reviewed and revised the draft continua for four communications standards; evaluated the preliminary draft continua for the other six Standards and made recommendations for additional rounds of field work.

EFF Assessment Framework

Timetable for Process and Products 2000–04

DATE	PROCESS	PRODUCTS
2000	**Field Research to Describe Performance on the EFF Standards** • Define 4 dimensions of the EFF performance continuum • Generate performance tasks and collect data on adult learner performance	• 4 dimensions of the EFF performance continuum defined. • Preliminary picture of performance along each dimension of the continuum for ABE and ESL learners.
2001	**Field Review and Analysis to Develop EFF Performance Continua** • Develop/refine performance continua for four Communication Standards. • Develop/refine performance continuum for *Use Math*. • Continue research to generate more data for remaining Standards.	• Draft performance level descriptors for each of the 4 EFF Communication Standards and for *Use Math to Communicate and Solve Problems*. • Range of performance tasks for all 5 Standards. • Practitioners with increased expertise in standards-based teaching and assessment.
2002	**Expert Review of Performance Continua (Phase 1)** • Panels of experts review performance continua for *Listen Actively, Speak So Others Can Understand,* and *Convey Ideas in Writing* • Panels of experts review performance continua for *Read With Understanding* and *Use Math to Solve Problems and Communicate*	• Revised performance level descriptors for the knowledge base, fluency, independence, and range dimensions of the performance continua for these 3 Standards • Revised performance level descriptors for these 2 Standards
	Match EFF Performance Continua to NRS Levels • Use results of content expert reviews of the 4 Communication Standards plus *Use Math* to draft EFF/NRS Educational Functioning Levels	• Draft EFF/NRS Educational Functioning Level Descriptors for 5 EFF Standards
November	**Conduct Accountability Model Development Workshop** • Review EFF/NRS Level Descriptors and identify benchmarks for use in state assessment systems • Develop models for state assessment and reporting of educational gains using the EFF/NRS Level Descriptors	• Revise EFF/NRS Level Descriptors • Draft specifications for assessment task, scoring rubrics, and reporting systems

(continued on page 34)

EFF Assessment Framework

Timetable for Process and Products 2000–04

DATE	PROCESS	PRODUCTS
2002 *continued*	**Plan Phase 2 Expert Reviews**	• Design for second round of content expert review panels
	Plan Task Development Institute (Phase 1)	• Design of Task Development Institute
	Conduct Task Development Institute (Phase 1)	• Assessment tasks, scoring rubrics, and reporting guidelines for 4 EFF Communication Skills and *Use Math*
2003	**Pilot Test Assessment, Scoring, and Reporting Tools for Phase 1 EFF/NRS Levels** **Develop Materials and Resources for Training and Technical Assistance**	• Revisions to assessment tasks, scoring rubrics, and reporting guidelines • Handbook and technical assistance resources
	Expert Review of Performance Continua (Phase 2)	• Revised performance continua for selected Interpersonal, Decision-Making, and Lifelong Learning Skills Standards
	Distribute EFF Tools for Assessing and Reporting Education Gains on EFF/NRS Levels	• Specifications for assessment tasks, scoring rubrics, and reporting • Sample assessment tasks, scoring guidelines, and reporting forms
	Task Development Institute (Phase 2)	• Assessment tasks, scoring rubrics, and reporting guidelines for selected Interpersonal, Decision-Making, and Lifelong Learning Skills Standards
	Pilot Test Assessment, Scoring, and Reporting Tools for Phase 2 EFF/NRS Levels **Update Materials and Resources for Training and Technical Assistance**	• Revisions to assessment tasks, scoring rubrics, and reporting guidelines • Revised handbook and technical assistance resources
2004 January	**Distribute Phase 2 Tools**	• Specifications • Sample tools and support materials

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Equipped for the Future Field Development Partners, 2000–01

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Agreement Forms – EFF/NRS Project 2001-02

For Teachers

I have read the project description and participant responsibilities and I agree to:

- attend initial training that will prepare me to plan and describe well-constructed learning tasks; document observations of performance; and use the data collection/reporting tools;
- spend six to ten hours per week in EFF-friendly instructional planning, teaching, and documenting/reporting on at least two standards (see my choices below);
- meet with EFF team members in my program on a regular basis (at least bi-weekly) to collaborate on establishing rankings for tasks and performances, and share challenges, ideas, resources and accomplishments;
- take advantage of opportunities to receive technical assistance from EFF field development staff, including site visits and participation in two statewide or regional technical assistance sessions through the year;
- attend two national meetings of field development partners;
- submit required reports and documentation in format requested (computer disk) and in a timely manner;
- ask for help when needed; and
- inform the project staff promptly if there are any changes in teaching circumstances that prevent or hinder the implementation of the work as outlined above.

Plans

I plan to work with the following group of students or class: (please describe educational level and type of class or group of students)

I would like to focus on the following Communication Standard:	The other Standard(s) I would like to focus on are:
First choice:_____	First choice:_____
Second choice:_____	Second choice:_____

Payment for Teachers: I understand that I will receive an honorarium for my participation in this project, and that the honorarium amount is not meant to be a direct reimbursement for each hour spent on work associated with the project. I understand that the national EFF management has recommended a stipend of $2,000 to $2,500 per teacher and that the final decision about the amount of the honorarium will be made by the state office of adult education, which is providing the honorarium. Expenses associated with the initial in-state training and subsequent state meetings of field sites will be covered by the state agency.

For Program Administrators:

I have read the project description and participant responsibilities and I agree to:

- support a team, consisting of three to four instructors and myself, in our involvement in the phase three field development process;
- assure that members of the team meet regularly and work collaboratively as much as possible to accomplish the goals of the EFF Phase 3 field development initiative;
- attend all training and technical assistance sessions, including state or regional and national meetings;
- observe instructional and documentation activities of the teachers;
- observe the effects of EFF implementation in my program;
- convene and actively participate in regular team meetings;
- encourage other professional development opportunities such as teacher cross-visitation/observation;
- take advantage of opportunities to receive technical assistance from EFF field development staff through site visits and meetings;
- insure that teacher reports and supporting documentation are completed and submitted on time;
- submit reports in format requested (computer disk) and in a timely manner.
- inform project staff promptly if there are any changes in the program's ability to participate in the project;
- manage the grant from the state agency that will provide stipends to participating teachers; and
- keep state agency contacts informed about the work.

Time Frame
October, 2000 through June, 2001, with a national debriefing meeting in September, 2001; see attached time table.

Equipped for the Future, through its grantee, the Center for Literacy Studies at the University of Tennessee, will pay for travel, lodging and meals for two national meetings (February and September).

Agreed:

Practitioner/Administrator	Program Director/State Agency Director
Date	Date
Social Security Number	

For State Agency Directors:
I have read the project description and participant responsibilities and I agree that I or my designated representative will:

- identify four to six programs in this state to participate in this project;
- commit to providing financial support to each of these field sites for their participation in meetings (two statewide site meetings), and for planning and documentation (a stipend of $6,000 - $10,000 per program site, or the equivalent of $2,000 - $2,500 per practitioner researcher)
- ensure that the field sites collectively represent a range of ABE (beginning, intermediate, ASE) and ESOL (beginning, intermediate, advanced) learners, unless otherwise negotiated with the EFF staff;
- keep well informed about what is happening in the field development process—by attending all trainings and meetings or by sending representatives
- think about how to integrate what is happening with EFF field development into the ongoing work of the statewide adult basic education system;
- make sure that three to four instructors and one administrator at each program are actively involved in field research/documentation, and are available for initial training, two state-wide/regional technical assistance sessions, on-site technical assistance, and two national meeting of pilot programs; and
- coordinate arrangements for initial in-state training and statewide/regional technical assistance sessions, both internally and with the EFF Assessment Coordinator who will also attend the meetings.

Expenses: Expenses associated with the initial in-state training and subsequent state meetings of field sites will be covered by the state agency. Equipped for the Future, through its grantee, the Center for Literacy Studies at the University of Tennessee, will pay for travel, lodging and meals for all participants for two national meetings (February and September), and technical assistance and support.

Agreed:

State Director of Adult Education	Equipped for the Future Director
Date	Date

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Outcome Measures Definitions

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors — Adult Basic Education Levels

Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
BEGINNING ABE LITERACY *Test Benchmark:* **TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 0-1.9):** Total reading 529 and below Total math 540 and below Total language 599 and below **TABE (7-8) scale scores (grade level 0-1.9):** Reading 367 and below Total Math 313 and below Language 391 and below **CASAS:** 200 and below **AMES (B, ABE) scale scores (grade level 0-1.9):** Reading: 500 and below Total Math: 476 and below Communication: 496 and below **ABLE scale scores (grade level 0-1.9):** Reading 523 and below Math 521 and below	Individual has no or minimal reading and writing skills. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument. At the upper range of this level, individual can recognize, read and write letters and numbers, but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading. Can write a limited number of basic sight words and familiar words and phrases; may also be able to write simple sentences or phrases, including very simple messages. Can write basic personal information. Narrative writing is disorganized and unclear; inconsistently uses simple punctuation (e.g., periods, commas, question marks); contains frequent errors in spelling.	Individual has little or no recognition of numbers or simple counting skills or may have only minimal skills, such as the ability to add or subtract single digit numbers.	Individual has little or no ability to read basic signs or maps, can provide limited personal information on simple forms. The individual can handle routine entry level jobs that require little or no basic written communication or computational skills and no knowledge of computers or other technology.
BEGINNING BASIC EDUCATION *Test Benchmark:* **TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 2-3.9):** Total reading 530-679 Total math 541-677 Total language 600-677 **TABE (7-8): scale scores (grade level 2-3.9):** Reading: 368-460 Total Math: 314-441 Language: 392-490 **CASAS:** 201-210 **AMES (B, ABE) scale scores (grade level 2-3.9):** Reading: 503-510 Total Math: 477-492 Communication: 498-506 **ABLE scale scores (grade level 2-3.9):** Reading: 525-612 Math: 530-591	Individual can read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple and compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary; can write simple notes and messages on familiar situations, but lacks clarity and focus. Sentence structure lacks variety, but shows some control of basic grammar (e.g., present and past tense), and consistent use of punctuation (e.g., periods, capitalization).	Individual can count, add and subtract three digit numbers, can perform multiplication through 12; can identify simple fractions and perform other simple arithmetic operations.	Individual is able to read simple directions, signs and maps, fill out simple forms requiring basic personal information, write phone messages and make simple change. There is minimal knowledge of, and experience with, using computers and related technology. The individual can handle basic entry level jobs that require minimal literacy skills; can recognize very short, explicit, pictorial texts, e.g. understands logos related to worker safety before using a piece of machinery; can read want ads and complete simple job applications.

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Outcome Measures Definitions

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors — Adult Basic Education Levels

Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
LOW INTERMEDIATE BASIC EDUCATION *Test benchmark:* **TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 4-5.9):** Total reading: 680-722 Total math: 678-729 Total language: 678-705 **TABE (7-8) scale scores (grade level 4-5.9):** Reading: 461-517 Total Math: 442-505 Language: 491-523 **CASAS: 211-220** **AMES (B and C, ABE) scale scores (grade level 4-5.9):** Reading (B): 511-609 Reading (C): 514-521 Total Math (B): 494-603 Total Math (C): 493-508 Communication (B): 508-605, (C) 509-513 **ABLE scale scores (grade level 4-5.9):** Reading: 613-644 Math: 593-641	Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions, can write simple paragraphs with main idea and supporting detail on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; can self and peer edit for spelling and punctuation errors.	Individual can perform with high accuracy all four basic math operations using whole numbers up to three digits; can identify and use all basic mathematical symbols. Individual is able to handle basic reading, writing and computational tasks related to life roles, such as completing medical forms, order forms or job applications; can read simple charts, graphs labels and payroll stubs and simple authentic material if familiar with the topic. The individual can use simple computer programs and perform a sequence of routine tasks given direction using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer operation).	The individual can qualify for entry level jobs that require following basic written instructions and diagrams with assistance, such as oral clarification; can write a short report or message to fellow workers; can read simple dials and scales and take routine measurements.
HIGH INTERMEDIATE BASIC EDUCATION *Test benchmark:* **TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 6-8.9):** Total reading: 723-761 Total math: 730-776 Total language: 706-730 **TABE (7-8) scale scores (grade level 6-8.9):** Reading: 518-566 Total Math: 506-565 Language: 524-559 **CASAS: 221-235** **AMES (C and D, ABE) scale scores (grade level 6-8.9):** Reading (C): 525-612 Reading (D): 522-543 Total Math (C): 510-627 Total Math (D): 509-532 Communication (C): 516-611 Communication (D): 516-523 **ABLE scale score (grade level 6-8.9):** Reading: 646-680 Math: 643-693	Individual is able to read simple descriptions and narratives on familiar subjects or from which new vocabulary can be determined by context; can make some minimal inferences about familiar texts and compare and contrast information from such texts, but not consistently. The individual can write simple narrative descriptions and short essays on familiar topics; has consistent use of basic punctuation, but makes grammatical errors with complex structures.	Individual can perform all four basic math operations with whole numbers and fractions; can determine correct math operations for solving narrative math problems and can convert fractions to decimals and decimals to fractions; can perform basic operations on fractions.	Individual is able to handle basic life skills tasks such as graphs, charts and labels, and can follow multi-step diagrams; can read authentic materials on familiar topics, such as simple employee handbooks and payroll stubs; can complete forms such as a job application and reconcile a bank statement. Can handle jobs that involves following simple written instructions and diagrams; can read procedural texts, where the information is supported by diagrams, to remedy a problem, such as locating a problem with a machine or carrying out repairs using a repair manual. The individual can learn or work with most basic computer software, such as using a word processor to produce own texts; can follow simple instructions for using technology.

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Outcome Measures Definitions

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors — Adult Basic Education Levels

Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
LOW ADULT SECONDARY EDUCATION *Test benchmark:* **TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 9-10.9):** Total reading: 762-775 Total math: 777-789 Total language 731-743 **TABE (7-8): scale scores (grade level 9-10.9):** Reading: 567-595 Total Math: 566-594 Language: 560-585 **CASAS: 236-245** **AMES (E, ABE) scale scores (grade level 9-10.9):** Reading: 544-561 Total Math: 534-548 Communication: 527-535 **ABLE scale scores (grade level 9-10.9):** Reading: 682-697 Math: 694-710	Individual can comprehend expository writing and identify spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors; can comprehend a variety of materials such as periodicals and non-technical journals on common topics; can comprehend library reference materials and compose multi-paragraph essays; can listen to oral instructions and write an accurate synthesis of them; can identify the main idea in reading selections and use a variety of context issues to determine meaning. Writing is organized and cohesive with few mechanical errors; can write using a complex sentence structure; can write personal notes and letters that accurately reflect thoughts.	Individual can perform all basic math functions with whole numbers, decimals and fractions; can interpret and solve simple algebraic equations, tables and graphs and can develop own tables and graphs; can use math in business transactions.	Individual is able or can learn to follow simple multi-step directions, and read common legal forms and manuals; can integrate information from texts, charts and graphs; can create and use tables and graphs; can complete forms and applications and complete resumes; can perform jobs that require interpreting information from various sources and writing or explaining tasks to other workers; is proficient using computers and can use most common computer applications; can understand the impact of using different technologies; can interpret the appropriate use of new software and technology.
HIGH ADULT SECONDARY EDUCATION *Test benchmark:* **TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 11-12.9):** Total reading: 776 and above Total math: 790 and above Total language: 744 and above **TABE (7-8): scale scores (grade level 11-12):** Reading: 596 and above Total Math: 595 and above Language: 586 and above **CASAS: 246 and higher** **AMES (E, ABE) scale scores (grade level 11-12):** Reading: 565 and above Total Math: 551 and above Communication: 538 and above **ABLE scale scores (grade level 11-12):** Reading: 699 and above Math: 717 and above	Individual can comprehend, explain and analyze information from a variety of literacy works, including primary source materials and professional journals; can use context cues and higher order processes to interpret meaning of written material. Writing is cohesive with clearly expressed ideas supported by relevant detail; can use varied and complex sentence structures with few mechanical errors.	Individual can make mathematical estimates of time and space and can apply principles of geometry to measure angles, lines and surfaces; can also apply trigonometric functions.	Individuals are able to read technical information and complex manuals; can comprehend some college level books and apprenticeship manuals; can function in most job situations involving higher order thinking; can read text and explain a procedure about a complex and unfamiliar work procedure, such as operating a complex piece of machinery; can evaluate new work situations and processes, can work productively and collaboratively in groups and serve as facilitator and reporter of group work. The individual is able to use common software and learn new software applications; can define the purpose of new technology and software and select appropriate technology; can adapt use of software or technology to new situations and can instruct others, in written or oral form on software and technology use.

Outcome Measures Definitions

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors — English as a Second Language Levels

Literacy Level	Speaking and Listing	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
BEGINNING ESL LITERACY *Test benchmark:* CASAS (Life Skills): 180 and below SPL (Speaking) 0-1 SPL (Reading and Writing) 0-1 Oral BEST: 0-15 Literacy BEST: 0-7	Individual cannot speak or understand English, or understands only isolated words or phrases.	Individual has no or minimal reading or writing skills in any language. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument.	Individual functions minimally or not at all in English and can communicate only through gestures or a few isolated words, such as name and other personal information; may recognize only common signs or symbols (e.g., stop sign, product logos); can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English. There is no knowledge or use of computers or technology.
BEGINNING ESL *Test benchmark:* CASAS (Life Skills): 181-200 SPL (Speaking) 2-3 SPL (Reading and Writing) 2-4 Oral BEST 16-41 Literacy BEST: 8-46	Individual can understand frequently used words in context and very simple phrases spoken slowly and with some repetition; there is little communicative output and only in the most routine situations; little or no control over basic grammar; survival needs can be communicated simply, and there is some understanding of simple questions.	Individual can recognize, read and write numbers and letters, but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading; can write a limited number of basic sight words and familiar words and phrases; may also be able to write simple sentences or phrases, including very simple messages. Can write basic personal information. Narrative writing is disorganized and unclear; inconsistently uses simple punctuation (e.g., periods, commas, question marks); contains frequent errors in spelling.	Individual functions with difficulty in situations related to immediate needs and in limited social situations; has some simple oral communication abilities using simple learned and repeated phrases; may need frequent repetition; can provide personal information on simple forms; can recognize common forms of print found in the home and environment, such as labels and product names; can handle routine entry level jobs that require only the most basic written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. There is minimal knowledge or experience using computers or technology.
LOW INTERMEDIATE ESL *Test benchmark:* CASAS (Life Skills): 201-210 SPL (Speaking) 4 SPL (Reading and Writing) 5 Oral BEST: 42-50 Literacy BEST: 47-53	Individual can understand simple learned phrases and limited new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly with frequent repetition; can ask and respond to questions using such phrases; can express basic survival needs and participate in some routine social conversations, although with some difficulty; has some control of basic grammar.	Individual can read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple and compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary; can write simple notes and messages on familiar situations, but lacks clarity and focus. Sentence structure lacks variety, but shows some control of basic grammar (e.g., present and past tense), and consistent use of punctuation (e.g., periods, capitalization).	Individual can interpret simple directions and schedules, signs and maps; can fill out simple forms, but needs support on some documents that are not simplified; can handle routine entry level jobs that involve some written or oral English communication, but in which job tasks can be demonstrated. Individual can use simple computer programs and can perform a sequence of routine tasks given directions using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer).

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Outcome Measures Definitions

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors — English as a Second Language Levels

Literacy Level	Speaking and Listing	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
HIGH INTERMEDIATE ESL *Test benchmark:* CASAS (Life Skills): 211-220 SPL (Speaking) 5 SPL (Reading and Writing) 6 Oral BEST: 51-57 Literacy BEST: 54-65	Individual can understand learned phrases and short new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly and with some repetition; can communicate basic survival needs with some help; can participate in conversation in limited social situations and use new phrases with hesitation; relies on description and concrete terms. There is inconsistent control of more complex grammar.	Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions, can write simple paragraphs with main idea and supporting detail on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; can self and peer edit for spelling and punctuation errors.	Individual can meet basic survival and social needs, can follow some simple oral and written instruction and has some ability to communicate on the telephone on familiar subjects; can write messages and notes related to basic needs; complete basic medical forms and job applications; can handle jobs that involve basic oral instructions and written communication in tasks that can be clarified orally. The individual can work with or learn basic computer software, such as word processing; can follow simple instructions for using technology.
LOW ADVANCED ESL *Test benchmark:* CASAS (Life Skills): 221-235 SPL (Speaking) 6 SPL (Reading and Writing) 7 Oral BEST 58-64 Literacy BEST: 66 and above	Individual can converse on many everyday subjects and some subjects with unfamiliar vocabulary, but may need repetition, rewording or slower speech; can speak creatively, but with hesitation; can clarify general meaning by rewording and has control of basic grammar; understands descriptive and spoken narrative and can comprehend abstract concepts in familiar contexts.	Individual is able to read simple descriptions and narratives on familiar subjects or from which new vocabulary can be determined by context; can make some minimal inferences about familiar texts and compare and contrast information from such texts, but not consistently. The individual can write simple narrative descriptions and short essays on familiar topics, such as customs in native country; has consistent use of basic punctuation, but makes grammatical errors with complex structures.	Individual can function independently to meet most survival needs and can communicate on the telephone on familiar topics; can interpret simple charts and graphics; can handle jobs that require simple oral and written instructions, multi-step diagrams and limited public interaction. The individual can use all basic software applications, understand the impact of technology and select the correct technology in a new situation.
HIGH ADVANCED ESL *Test benchmark:* CASAS (Life Skills): 236-245 SPL (Speaking) 7 SPL (Reading and Writing) 8 Oral BEST 65 and above	Individual can understand and participate effectively in face-to-face conversations on everyday subjects spoken at normal speed; can converse and understand independently in survival, work and social situations; can expand on basic ideas in conversation, but with some hesitation; can clarify general meaning and control basic grammar, although still lacks total control over complex structures.	Individual can read authentic materials on everyday subjects and can handle most reading related to life roles; can consistently and fully interpret descriptive narratives on familiar topics and gain meaning from unfamiliar topics; uses increased control of language and meaning-making strategies to gain meaning of unfamiliar texts. The individual can write multiparagraph essays with a clear introduction and development of ideas; writing contains well formed sentences, appropriate mechanics and spelling, and few grammatical errors.	Individual has a general ability to use English effectively to meet most routine social and work situations; can interpret routine charts, graphs and tables and complete forms; has high ability to communicate on the telephone and understand radio and television; can meet work demands that require reading and writing and can interact with the public. The individual can use common software and learn new applications; can define the purpose of software and select new applications appropriately; can instruct others in use of software and technology.

APPENDIX B
Assessment, Tools and Templates

The EFF Purposes of Assessment Chart and Background on its Development

EFF Performance Template

Teaching and Learning with EFF Standards

EFF Task Template

Worksheet: Developing a Well-Structured Performance Task

Student Documentation Form

Teacher Observation Form

EFF Purposes of Assessment

What do we want to learn from assessment?	Why assess before instruction?	Why assess during instruction?	Why assess after instruction?	Uses of assessment results beyond instructional setting	"Next Step" uses of Assessment Results
Individual Achievement: *What an individual learner knows and is able to do in order to meet self-identified purposes in roles of family member, worker and citizen.*	• placement • baseline information for learner-centered curriculum planning	• measure short-term skill development and goal achievement • on-going goal-setting and curriculum planning • diagnosing problems • identifying and addressing obstacles	• measure end of cycle skills development and goals achievement	• teacher reports to learners, families, communities • learner self-assessment • guidance in future educational planning	• on-going learner-centered goal setting and curriculum planning
Individual Mastery and Credentialing: *How much the learner knows and how well the learner is able to perform against broad and broadly accepted criteria for "what matters" to adults according to their purposes in their roles.*	• placement • credentialing current knowledge and skills	• measure progress toward attainment according to criteria for "what matters" • credentialing current knowledge and skills	• promotion • credentialing current knowledge and skills	• diploma or equivalent certificate • credential • license	• selection • admission • licensing • employment
Program Improvement and Accountability: *How well an educational program assists learners as groups to meet their purposes for adult basic and literacy education in their roles.*	• summary of baseline information for learner-centered continuous quality improvement purposes	• internal monitoring of program planning, curriculum development, recruitment and retention processes to meet learner goals and needs	• summary of post-instruction achievements and status related to learner goals and needs	• develop protocols for program self-assessment and continuous improvement • accountability reports	• continuous program improvement • policy development
System Improvement and Accountability: *How well an educational system assists learners as groups to meet their purposes for adult basic and literacy education in their roles.*	• summary of baseline information for research and evaluation purposes	• evaluation of program planning, curriculum development, recruitment and retention processes	• system accountability reporting (state and federal)	• develop protocols for research and evaluation • accountability reports	• determining whether the system is still focused on the right results • evaluating effectiveness of instructional programs • policy development • "temperature-taking" (state, national, and international descriptions of current performance)

Background on the Development of the EFF Purposes of Assessment Chart

Early in the work of developing the EFF Assessment Framework, we identified three primary purposes for assessment that the Framework needs to address:

1. to provide information on learner progress that is useful during the instructional process;
2. to provide information about learner achievements to stakeholders in the adult education system;
3. and to provide information that is useful for program and system accountability

Drawing on the recommendations of the expert review panels for the EFF Content Standards (held in January, 1999) during which panelists discussed possible assessments for the standards, we created a draft "EFF Purposes of Assessment" matrix by asking, and proposing answers to the broad framing questions:

- Who needs the results of assessment of adult learners?
- Why and for what purposes do they need those results?
- When/at what points in the learning process do they need those results?

The structure of this matrix was informed by *Linking Educational Assessments: Concepts, Issues, Methods and Prospects* by Robert Mislevy (ETS, 1992) and was based on an EFF-friendly adaptation of a chart that appears in that publication (*Table 1: Description of Assessment Purposes*) which itself was adapted from Millman and Greene's Table 8.1 (1989).

For example, in developing the vertical categories of "who and why/for what purpose," Mislevy's *type of inference desired* became our "what do we want to learn from assessment?" *Description of individual examinees' attainments* became our "what an individual learner knows/is able to do to meet self-identified purposes in roles roles of family member/worker/citizen."

Mislevy's *mastery decision* was changed to "Individual Mastery/Credentialing: how much the learner knows/how well the learner is able to perform against broad and broadly accepted criteria for 'what matters' to adults according to their purposes in their roles" and the category *description of performance for a group or system* became 2 categories of "what we want to learn and why: 1) 'Program Improvement/Accountability' and 2) 'System Improvement/Accountability.'"

To address the horizontal categories of "when/at what points" we used Mislevy's *Curricular Domain* (before/during/after instruction); his *Cognitive Domain and Future Performance in Criterion Setting* became our "Uses of assessment results beyond instructional setting" and "Next-Step uses of assessment results."

We then filled in the matrix based on our collective knowledge and experience. During the April 1999 meeting of field sites, participants reviewed the matrix raised issues and concerns, and offered suggestions for further work. Later a smaller Assessment Workgroup spent a full day working with the matrix in order to identify currently used and/or available assessment instruments and strategies that might align with the various purposes (and be useful before, during and/or after instruction); suggest other/alternative/new/needed assessment tools to meet the requirements of the EFF Standards for the variety of purposes; and provide further guidance on the structure/content/overall usefulness of the draft purposes matrix.

Template: Documenting Adult Learner Performance Against EFF Standards

EFF Standard:	Components of Performance:

Dimensions	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-30	31-40
KNOWLEDGE BASE: What do learners know? 1. What vocabulary do learners have related to the skill? Related to the subject area?		Simple vocabulary		Simple vocabulary with some multi-syllabic words	Growing vocabulary with a good store of multisyllabic, non-technical words	Moderate store of vocabulary, some new and technical
2. What content knowledge do learners have related to the skill? Related to the subject area?		Minimal familiarity with content-related facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/ or practices		Familiarity with a small store of content-related facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/ or practices	Familiarity with a good enough store of facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/ or practices to carry out the task	Familiarity with a good enough store of facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/ or practices to carry out the task

Dimensions	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-90	91-100
KNOWLEDGE BASE: What do learners know? 1. What vocabulary do learners have related to the skill? Related to the subject area?	Moderate store of vocabulary, some new and technical	Good store of vocabulary, including some new and technical	Good store of vocabulary, including some new and technical	Large store of vocabulary including new and technical	Extensive vocabulary that includes technical and infrequently used terms	Extensive vocabulary that includes technical and infrequently used terms
2. What content knowledge do learners have related to the skill? Related to the subject area?	Familiarity with a good enough store of facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/ or practices to carry out the task	Familiarity with a range of facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/or practices to meet the demands of the task	Familiarity with a range of facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/ or practices to meet the demands of the task	Familiarity with a range of facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/ or practices to meet the demands of the task	Extensive, advanced and complex content knowledge useful for multiple purposes	Extensive, advanced and complex content knowledge useful for multiple purposes

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Documenting Adult Learner Performance Against EFF Standards

Dimensions	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-30	31-40
KNOWLEDGE BASE: **3. What strategies do learners have for organizing and applying content knowledge?** **• can learners recognize relationships or connections?** **• can learners create new relationships or connections?**		Extremely concrete activation of prior learning; only a small number of strategies, limited to simple recall of information		Concrete activation of prior learning; a small number of strategies, including restatement, paraphrase, some explanation; can use some examples	*Initial* "pattern recognition," i.e., beginning "chunking" and elaborating of information; some early abstraction in activation of prior learning; some strategies: explanation, summary, paraphrase, restatement, use of examples	Pattern recognition, i.e., "chunking" and elaboration of information; activation of prior learning more abstract and complex; some strategies, mostly simple, some "higher-order"; ability to classify and categorize information; some recognition of cause and effect relationships; explanation, interpretation, translation, some generalization, inference, prediction
• can learners identify information that is important to the task/ problem?		Little conscious ability to identify important information		Limited ability to identify important information	Some conscious ability to identify information that is relevant to a clearly-defined purpose	Ability to recognize and restate important information for application to a clearly defined purpose
• can learners understand when information or concepts apply?		Minimal understanding of when to apply information		Limited understanding of when to apply information	Some understanding of when to apply information	Good understanding of when to apply information

Documenting Adult Learner Performance Against EFF Standards

Dimensions	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-90	91-100
KNOWLEDGE BASE: 3. What strategies do learners have for organizing and applying content knowledge? • **can learners recognize relationships or connections?** • **can learners create new relationships or connections?**	Pattern recognition, i.e., "chunking" and elaboration of information; ability to activate prior learning in abstract and complex ways, integrating and applying some new concepts; range of simple, and a few "higher order" strategies; identification of cause and effect relationships; some generalization, inference, prediction	Pattern recognition, i.e., "chunking" and elaboration of information; activation of prior knowledge and integration of new rules/ principles/etc. to solve some problems; multiple strategies, some simple and some "higher order"; identification of cause and effect relationships; some generalization, inference, prediction	Beginning of pattern creation, i.e., "restructuring" into new meanings based on complex integration of prior learning and new information; multiple strategies; comparison/ contrast, analogies, relationships between concepts and related details; inference, prediction	Some pattern creation, i.e., "restructuring" into new meanings based on complex integration of prior learning and new information; multiple strategies allowing understanding of both content and form (organizational structure/ relationship of parts to each other). Analysis, generalization, inference, prediction, abstraction.	A range of complex, embedded strategies for integrating prior learning with new information; ability to restructure content knowledge in new ways to yield new meanings and new systems of understanding. Bias recognition, criticism, conclusion, justification.	A broad range and variety of complex, embedded strategies for integrating prior learning with new information; creation of new, multiple patterns of meaning and new organizational structures; proposing/ developing alternate systems of knowledge and understanding; consultation with multiple, alternative sources of information
• **can learners identify information that is important to the task/ problem?**	Ability to identify important information for application	Ability to identify new information and to self-monitor comprehension	Ability to identify relevance of information for multiple purposes	Ability to identify relevance of information for multiple purposes	Conscious identification of important/ relevant information for multiple purposes in a variety of contexts	Consistently "conditioned" knowledge; elimination of incorrect/ irrelevant information; strategic adaptation or "tuning" of skill processes for particular uses
• **can learners understand when information or concepts apply?**	Good understanding of when to apply information	Strong understanding of when to apply information	Broad understanding of when to apply information	Broad understanding of when/under what conditions to apply information; ability to choose best option among several possibilities	Broad understanding of when/under what conditions to apply information; ability to choose best option among several possibilities	Broad under-standing of when/under what conditions to apply information; ability to choose best option among several possibilities

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Documenting Adult Learner Performance Against EFF Standards

Dimensions	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-30	31-40
PERFORMANCE: How well can learners perform: **1. How fluently can learners perform?** **• How much effort is required?**		Performs slowly, with difficulty, requiring great effort		Performs slowly, with difficulty, requiring great effort	Performs slowly, with noticeable effort (or inappropriately quickly, with insufficient attention)	Performs with some hesitation but with more appropriate speed and more comfort
• How consistently do learners start and finish, getting to the desired outcome?		Makes a lot of errors, produces little and has a hard time finishing		Makes a lot of errors, produces little and has a hard time finishing	Work is completed with considerable errors	Work is completed with some errors
• How well are barriers controlled or overcome?		Is easily diverted/ defeated by barriers		Is easily diverted/ defeated by barriers	Can identify some barriers but has a hard time controlling/ overcoming them	Can identify barriers and possible options for controlling or overcoming them; can pursue some options
2. How independently can the learners perform? **• How much help is needed from others?**		Needs substantial help from others		Needs substantial help from others	Needs substantial help from others	Needs some help from others
• How much initiative is shown in getting started?		Needs to be "pushed" to get started		Needs to be "pushed" to get started	Needs considerable prompting	Needs some prompting

Documenting Adult Learner Performance Against EFF Standards

Dimensions	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-90	91-100
PERFORMANCE: How well can learners perform: **1. How fluently can learners perform?** **• How much effort is required?**	Performs at a pace sufficient to finish, with growing comfort	Performs with ease; pace may be measured for thoroughness	Performs with ease; pace may be measured	Performs with ease and speed	Performs effortlessly, smoothly in well-organized steps, quickly	Performs effortlessly, quickly and automatically
• How consistently do learners start and finish, getting to the desired outcome?	Work is completed with some errors	Work is completed with few errors	Work is completed with few errors	Work is completed with few errors	Work is consistent, fully completed and almost error-free	Work is consistent, fully completed and almost error-free
• How well are barriers controlled or overcome?	Can strategize about how to address barriers and pursue options to control/ overcome them	Can strategize about how to address barriers and pursue options to control/ overcome them	Can strategize about how to address barriers and pursue options to control/ overcome them	Controls/ overcomes most barriers	Regularly addresses/ overcomes barriers as they arise	Regularly engages in complex processes and address/ overcomes any barriers that arise from them
2. How independently can the learners perform? **• How much help is needed from others?**	Needs some help from others	May need some help from others	May need some help from others	Rarely needs help from others	Needs no help from others	Needs no help from others
• How much initiative is shown in getting started?	Gets started without prompting	Gets started without prompting	Gets started without prompting	Gets started without prompting; may initiate new learning activities	Gets started and initiates activities without prompting	Initiates activities and creates new learning activities

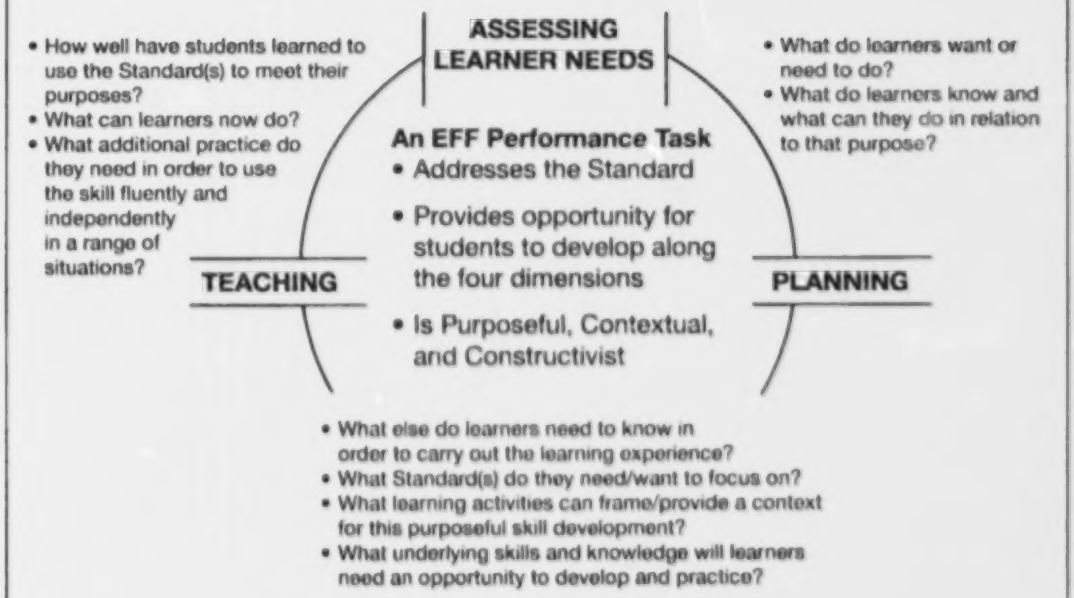
Documenting Adult Learner Performance Against EFF Standards

Dimensions	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-30	31-40
PERFORMANCE: **• How often do learners generate their own strategies to complete task?**		Depends upon outside structures, approaches, clarification, strong guidance		Depends upon outside structures, approaches, clarification, strong guidance	Needs significant structures, approaches, clarification, guidance	Needs structures, approaches, clarification, guidance
RANGE: **1. What kinds of tasks did learners carry out?** **• How complex is the task?**		Simple, one-step, well defined and highly structured, requiring limited prediction or judgment		Simple, finite but can be more than one step, well-defined and highly structured, requiring limited prediction or judgment	Simple, more than one step, well defined and highly structured, requiring some prediction or judgment	Multi-step, requiring integration of more than one skill; definition and structure provided; requires some prediction and judgment
• How many different kinds of tasks can learners perform?		Single task		Single task	More than one task	More than one task
2. In what contexts can learners perform? **• In what kinds of contexts?**		Familiar		Familiar	Familiar	Some familiar and some novel
• In how many different situations can learners perform?		Single situation		Single situation	More than one situation	More than one situation, indicating some "near" skill transfer, i.e., into similar situations

Documenting Adult Learner Performance Against EFF Standards

Dimensions	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-90	91-100
PERFORMANCE: **• How often do learners generate their own strategies to complete task?**	Needs limited structures and guidance; can generate some strategies on own	Needs limited structures and guidance; can generate strategies on own	Needs limited structures and guidance; can generate strategies on own	Can generate strategies on own; shows some ability to be adaptive and flexible in problem-solving	Generates multiple strategies on own without need of structure or guidance; can choose best option; adaptive and flexible in problem-solving	Generates multiple strategies including consultation with outside sources of information; approaches tasks without need of structure or guidance; can explain tasks to others and offer guidance; can choose and justify the most appropriate approach; highly adaptive and flexible in problem solving
RANGE: **1. What kinds of tasks did learners carry out?** **• How complex is the task?**	Multi-step, requiring integration of skills and prior knowledge; some definition and structure provided; requires some prediction and judgment	Multi-step, requiring integration of many skills and prior knowledge; little definition and structure provided; requires prediction and judgment	Multi-step, requiring integration of skills and prior knowledge; little definition or structure; requires prediction and judgment	Multi-step, requiring integration of skills and prior knowledge; no obvious definition or structure provided; requires prediction and judgment	Complex tasks featuring multiple, integrated steps and requiring frequent prediction and judgment	Complex tasks with multiple, integrated steps; self-initiated/ self-defined tasks requiring frequent prediction and judgment
• How many different kinds of tasks can learners perform?	Multiple tasks	Multiple tasks	Multiple tasks	Large number of tasks	Large number of tasks	Wide range and variety of tasks
2. In what contexts can learners perform? **• In what kinds of contexts?**	Some familiar and some novel	Some familiar and some novel	Some familiar and some novel	Familiar and novel	Little distinction in performance between familiar and novel	Little distinction in performance between familiar and novel
• In how many different situations can learners perform?	Multiple situations, indicating some "near" skill transfer, i.e., into similar situations	Multiple situations, indicating some skill transfer into similar and some novel situations	Multiple situations, indicating some skill transfer into similar and some novel situations	Multiple situations, with consistent transfer to "near" and novel situations	Systematic transfer across a large range of "near" and "far" (i.e., novel, difficult, complex) contexts	Systematic "near" and "far" transfer of skill across multiple, varied, complex environments

Teaching and Learning With EFF Standards


ASSESSING LEARNER NEEDS
• How well have students learned to use the Standard(s) to meet their purposes?
• What can learners now do?
• What additional practice do they need in order to use the skill fluently and independently in a range of situations?
• What do learners want or need to do?
• What do learners know and what can they do in relation to that purpose?
An EFF Performance Task
• Addresses the Standard
• Provides opportunity for students to develop along the four dimensions
• Is Purposeful, Contextual, and Constructivist
TEACHING
PLANNING
• What else do learners need to know in order to carry out the learning experience?
• What Standard(s) do they need/want to focus on?
• What learning activities can frame/provide a context for this purposeful skill development?
• What underlying skills and knowledge will learners need an opportunity to develop and practice?

Template: Analysis of Performance Task Requiring Effective Use of an EFF Standard

EFF Standard:	Components of Performance:

Dimensions	0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60
COMPLEXITY: 1. How complex is the task?	Simple, one-step, well defined and highly structured; requires limited prediction or judgment	Simple, finite but can be more than one step, well defined and highly structured; requires limited prediction or judgment	Simple, more than one step, well defined and highly structured; requires some prediction or judgment	Multi-step task requiring integration of more than one skill; definition/ structure provided; requires some prediction and judgment	Multi-step task requiring integration of skills and prior knowledge; some definition/ structure provided; requires some prediction and judgment	Multi-step task requiring integration of many skills and prior knowledge; little definition/ structure provided; requires prediction and judgment
CONTEXTS: In what context(s) will the task be performed? 1. How familiar is the context?	Familiar	Familiar	Familiar	Some familiar and some unfamiliar	Some familiar and some unfamiliar	Some familiar and some unfamiliar
2. In how many different situations will the task be performed?	Single environment	Single environment	More than one environment	More than one environment, indicating some transfer of skill	More than one environment, indicating some transfer of skill	More than one environment, indicating some transfer of skill
KNOWLEDGE BASE: What will learners need to know to perform this task?						
1. What vocabulary related to the skill? related to the subject area?	Simple vocabulary	Simple vocabulary; with some multisyllablic words	Growing vocabulary, with a good store of multisyllabic nontechnical words	Moderate store of vocabulary, including some unfamiliar and technical	Moderate store of vocabulary, including some unfamiliar and technical	Good store of vocabulary, including some unfamiliar and technical

Analysis of Performance Task Requiring Effective Use of and EFF Standard

Dimensions	0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60
KNOWLEDGE BASE:						
2. What content knowledge related to the skill? Related to the subject area?	Minimal familiarity with content-related facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols, and/or practices	Familiarity with a small store of content-related facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols, and/or practices	Familiarity with a good enough store of facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/or practices to carry out the task	Familiarity with a good enough store of facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/or practices to carry out the task	Familiarity with a good enough store of facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/or practices to carry out the task	Familiarity with a range of facts, operations, concepts, rules, protocols and/or practices, beyond the requirements of the task
3. What strategies for organizing and applying content knowledge?		Only a small number of strategies; including restatement, paraphrase, and some explanation. Can use examples	Some strategies: explanation; summary; paraphrase; restatement; use of examples; initial "pattern recognition"	Some strategies, mostly simple, a few "higher order"; pattern recognition; ability to classify/categorize information; some recognition of cause and effect relationships; explanation, interpretation, translation, some generalization, inference, prediction	Range of strategies, including a few "higher order"; pattern recognition; identification of cause and effect relationships; ability to apply new facts and concepts to prior experience to create new meaning; some generalization, inference, prediction	Multiple strategies, some simple and some "higher order"; pattern recognition; identification of cause and effect relationships; use of prior knowledge and application of rules/ principles/etc. to solve problems; some generalization, inference, prediction
• **Ability to recognize relationships or connections?**	Only a small number of strategies; limited to simple recall of information					
• **Ability to create new relationships or connections?**						
• **Ability to identify information that is important to the task/ problem?**	Little conscious ability to identify important information	Limited ability to identify important information	Some conscious ability to identify information that is relevant to a clearly defined purpose	Ability to recognize and restate important information for application to a clearly defined purpose	Ability to identify important information for application	ability to identify new information and to self-monitor comprehension.
• **Ability to understand when information or concepts apply?**	Minimal understanding of when to apply information	Limited understanding of when to apply information	Some understanding of when to apply information	Good understanding of when to apply information	Good understanding of when to apply information	Strong understanding of when identify important information for application

WORKSHEETS

A. DEVELOPING A WELL-STRUCTURED PERFORMANCE TASK

Name:_____ Date:_____

Description of the task: *(Q6A and Q6B on the Reporting Form)*

What is the Standard addressed in the task? _____

1. What are the components of performance for this Standard?	**How does the task incorporate each of the components?** *(Q6C on the Reporting Form)*
•	
•	
•	
•	
•	

2. Describe as fully as you can the task and its requirements in relation to the following Dimensions of Performance. *(Q7, Reporting Form)* **Use the *Task Template* for guidance.**		**Using the Task Template, assign a rating to the description.**
Complexity of the task:		
Context in which task will take place:		
Knowledge required for the task:		
1. vocabulary		
a. related to the Standard	1a.	1.
b. related to the task/ content area	1b.	
2. content knowledge		
a. related to the Standard	2a.	2.
b. related to the task/ content area	2b.	
3. strategies for organizing and applying content knowledge		
a. skill application strategies	3a	3.
b. cognitive/ metacognitive strategies	3b.	
3. Using the Task Template and the individual ratings given above, assign a rating to the overall task, within a five-point range. *(Q8, Reporting Form)*		

4. Explain your reasons for rating the task at this point on the continuum, including the weighting (if any) of specific dimensions. *(Q8, Reporting Form)*

5. Review the construction of the task. Indicate how the task

- sufficiently focuses on the targeted Standard and its Components of Performance so that performance can be rated:

- represents one instance of a meaningful, real-world use of the Standard:

- has immediate use or high transfer value for learner(s):

- is defined specifically enough so that the knowledge base requirements are clear:

- identifies what evidence you will look at to see how well the Standard was used to carry out the task:

6. Look back at the Knowledge base requirements for this task. Did you include enough information (a rich enough description) to know what to look for:

a. To document and assess student performance?
b. To help us specify the template and build the continuum for this Standard?

Knowledge Base Requirements for Task:	**What More Do You Need?**
1. Vocabulary a. related to the Standard	
b. related to the task/content area	
2. Content Knowledge a. related to the Standard	
b. related to the task/content area	
3. Strategies for Organizing and Applying Content Knowledge a. skill application strategies	
b. cognitive/metacognitive strategies	

7. As a teacher, how can you use this information to help you plan instruction? What will you pay attention to?

B. DESCRIBING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Now look at the descriptions of performance for each learner that you have collected (on the *Observation Form* and by other means).

Use the table below to consider the following:

8. Do the descriptions adequately address the knowledge base requirements of the task? *(compare with Q2)*

9. Do descriptions adequately address (a) fluency, (b) independence, and (c) range of performance?

10. Are the descriptions adequate to:
a. Help you assess what the learner knows and can do?
b. Help us build the performance continuum for this skill? *(Q10 on the reporting form)*

Description of Performance on Standard for each Learner	Adequate	Inadequate	What additional information is needed in the description?
Knowledge Base			
1. Vocabulary a. related to the Standard			
b. related to the task/ content area			

Description of Performance on Standard for each Learner	Adequate	Inadequate	What additional information is needed in the description?
2. Content Knowledge a. related to the Standard			
b. related to the task/ content area			
3. Strategies for Organizing and Applying content knowledge a. skill application strategies			
b. cognitive/metacognitive strategies			
Fluency			
Independence			
Range			

11. How will you use this information to plan "Next Steps" for learners?

Student Documentation Form for EFF Standards

Your Name _____ EFF Standard _____ Date _____

PERFORMANCE TASK _____ Common Activity _____

What knowledge does the task require?	What do you know?	How well can you perform?	How do you know?
• Vocabulary			
• Content			
• Strategies			

Equipped for the Future Standards

What do you know?

1. Do you have vocabulary
   - related to the skill?
   - related to the subject area?

2. Do you have content knowledge
   - related to the skill?
   - related to the subject area?

3. Do you have strategies for organizing and applying content knowledge?
   - related to the Standard?
   - related to the task content area?

How well can you perform?

1. How fluently can you perform?
   - How much effort is required?
   - How hard is it to start and finish the work?
   - How well do you handle problems that come up?

2. How independently can you perform?
   - How much help do I need from others?
   - Can I get started on my own?
   - How well can I figure out what to do on my own?

How do you know?

1. What evidence do you have of what you know? of how well you can perform?
   - Has someone observed you?
   - Is there a record of the evidence? (an audio or video tape, teacher's observation notes)

   - Do you have work that you have produced? Journal entries, papers, computer work, notes, anything that you have done while working on this task.

Teacher Observation Form

Student _____ EFF Standard _____ Date _____

PERFORMANCE TASK_____ Common Activity_____ Teacher _____

What knowledge does the task require?	What do learners know?	How well can learners perform?	How do you know?
• Vocabulary			
• Content Knowledge			
• Strategies			

Observing EFF Performance Tasks

What do learners know?

1. Do learners have vocabulary
   - related to the skill?
   - related to the subject area?

2. Do learners have content knowledge
   - related to the skill?
   - related to the subject area?

3. Do learners have strategies for organizing and applying content knowledge
   - related to the standard?
   - related to the task content area?

How well can learners perform?

1. How fluently can learners perform?
   - How much effort is required?
   - How consistently do learners start and finish, getting to the desired outcome?
   - How well are barriers controlled or overcome?

2. How independently can learners perform?
   - How much help is needed from others?
   - How much initiative is shown in getting started?
   - How often do learners generate their own strategies to complete tasks?

How do you know?

1. What evidence do you have of what learners know? of how well they perform?
   - What did you observe?
   - Is there corroborating evidence? (e.g., someone else's observations or report)
   - Is there a record of the evidence? (an audio or video tape, your observation notes)
   - Are there any artifacts? (student work, products)
   - Have you created any rubrics or other forms to collect and/or rate performance?

Please attach any evidence of performance.

APPENDIX C
Reporting

Annotated Teacher Reporting Form

Excerpts From Data Report on a Performance Task for *Read With Understanding*

Annotated Teacher Reporting Form

EFF Field Development Reporting Form 2000-2001

TEACHER NAME:_____

PROGRAM NAME:_____

STATE: _____ BEGIN DATE: _____ REPORT#_____

PROGRAM/CLASS INFORMATION

• **%Q1.** Which of the following terms does your program use to describe the location, administration and setting and of your program: *(Please check all that apply with an "X" to the left of each item.)*

- ☐ Rural (outside urban area, population < 2,500)
- ☐ Urban (population >50,000)
- ☐ Mixed rural/small cities
- ☐ Community college
- ☐ Local Education Agency
- ☐ Community-based organization
- ☐ Correctional facility
- ☐ Workplace program
- ☐ Homeless program
- ☐ Family Literacy
- ☐ Other setting, please specify

_____

• **%Q2.** Which of the following terms describe the specific class or group of students you are reporting on: *(Please check all that apply with an "X" to the left of each item.)*

- ☐ Adult Basic Education (ABE)
- ☐ ESL
- ☐ Adult Secondary Education (ASE)—Family Literacy
- ☐ Workplace program
- ☐ Homeless program
- ☐ Correctional facilities
- ☐ Community corrections programs
- ☐ Other institutional programs

• **%Q3.** Use the following NRS levels to describe the educational level of the students involved in the performance task described in this report.

- ☐ Beginning ABE Literacy
- ☐ Beginning Basic Education
- ☐ Low Intermediate Basic Education
- ☐ High Intermediate Basic Education
- ☐ Low Adult Secondary Education
- ☐ High Adult Secondary Education
- ☐ Beginning ESL Literacy
- ☐ Beginning ESL
- ☐ Low Intermediate ESL
- ☐ High Intermediate ESL
- ☐ Low Advanced ESL
- ☐ High Advanced ESL
- ☐

Other:_____

• **%Q4.** Which one individual standard are you documenting in this report? (Please check with an "X" to the left of the item.)

- ☐ 1. Read With Understanding
- ☐ 2. Convey Ideas in Writing
- ☐ 3. Speak So Others Can Understand
- ☐ 4. Listen Actively
- ☐ 5. Observe Critically
- ☐ 6. Use Math to Solve Problems and Communicate
- ☐ 7. Solve Problems and Make Decisions
- ☐ 8. Plan
- ☐ 9. Cooperate with Others
- ☐ 10. Advocate and Influence
- ☐ 11. Resolve Conflict and Negotiate
- ☐ 12. Guide Others
- ☐ 13. Take Responsibility for Learning
- ☐ 14. Reflect and Evaluate
- ☐ 15. Learn Through Research
- ☐ 16. Use Information and Communications Technology

EFF Field Development Reporting Form 2000-2001

• **%Q5.** Which Common Activity provides the context for the performance task described in this report? (Please check one with an "X" to the left of the item.)

- ☐ 1. Gather, Analyze and Use Information
- ☐ 2. Manage Resources
- ☐ 3. Work Within the Big Picture
- ☐ 4. Work Together
- ☐ 5. Provide Leadership
- ☐ 6. Guide and Support Others
- ☐ 7. Seek Guidance and Support From Others
- ☐ 8. Develop and Express Sense of Self
- ☐ 9. Respect Others and Value Diversity
- ☐ 10. Exercise Rights and Responsibilities
- ☐ 11. Create and Pursue Vision and Goals
- ☐ 12. Use Technology and Other Tools to Accomplish Goals
- ☐ 13. Keep Pace with Change

IDENTIFYING AND RANKING THE TASK

• **%Q6.** Provide a rich, detailed description of the task that requires use of the identified EFF standard, by answering the questions below:

• **%Q6A.** What is the task?
Enter the description of the performance task from the Worksheet. See point 5, p.7 in Chapter 1 for reminders.
See Section 7, Examples 1, 2, 3, to see how other teachers answered this question.

• **%Q6B.** What is the purpose of the task? Explain why and how it requires the learner to use the Standard.
Enter the purpose from the Worksheet.
See Section 7, Examples 1, 2, 3

• **%Q6C.** Explain how this task requires learners to address each component of the standard.
Again, refer to your Worksheet for this task. After you have determined that the task addresses each component, explain HOW.

RATING THE TASK

Use the task template to describe and provide a numerical rating for each dimension of the task.
The task template is explained in Chapter 2: Creating and Rating an EFF Performance Task.
Refer to Section 7, Examples 1,3, and 4 to see how other teachers responded to Q7A-C

• **%Q7A.** Complexity of the task.
DESCRIBE:
Refer to Section 2 of the Worksheet, where you recorded detailed descriptive information about the task. Enter the information about complexity here.

RATING:
Using the Task Template, rate the objective complexity of the task and enter the numerical value here.

Do the same for Q7B-7C.

• **%Q7B.** The context in which this task will take place.
DESCRIBE:

RATING:

• **%Q7C.** What is the knowledge required for the task? *Describe below, 7C1-3.*

• **Q7C1.** Vocabulary needed, related to the skill and to the subject area.

DESCRIBE:

RATING:

EFF Field Development Reporting Form 2000-2001

• **Q7C2.** Content knowledge needed, related to the skill and to the subject area.

DESCRIBE:

RATING:

• **Q7C3.** Strategies needed for organizing and applying the content knowledge.

DESCRIBE:

RATING:

OVERALL TASK RATING:

• **%Q8.** Provide a numerical rating of the overall task, within a five point range. Explain why you ranked the task here, including the weighting (if any) of specific dimensions.

OVERALL RANK:

REASONS:
Refer to Example 1 for the way one teacher gave her rationale for the task rating.

• **Q9.** Write about the learning activities that you and your students have been engaged in, to pr pare for and perform the task described above in Questions 6 –8. You may write in a journal format, with entries over time. What was your overall plan? What happened? How did it go? Were you pleased? Attach (to the hard copy of this report) the evidence of student performance related to this teaching/learning interaction, including your written observations of performance on observation worksheet.
In Q9, write about what takes place, both to prepare for the performance task and to carry out the performance task.

Use the observation form to collect information on what learners know and how well they perform, in relation to the knowledge required for the task. Describe what you see going on, writing notes directly on the observation form. You will use these forms to answer Q10 for each student.

Refer to Examples 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, to see how other teachers wrote about their activities.

Many of the Examples in Section 7 have artifacts attached.

OBSERVATIONS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

DATE OF COMPLETION OF PERFORMANCE TASK _____

Q10. Answer the following questions about learner performance of the task described in Q6 and Q7. Use your Observation Worksheets and the Performance Template as your guide for describing performance and rating performance. Space is provided to report on three students. If you are reporting on more than three students, please refer to the technical instructions for guidance in adding more students to this report.

• **%Q10 STUDENT 1:**
Make sure your artifacts and observation sheets for this student are labeled by this number.

• **Q10A.** What does the learner know that allowed him/her to carry out the task as s/he did? Description of vocabulary, content knowledge and strategies for organizing and applying content knowledge:
Refer to Chapter 4, Knowledge Base, for guidance. See Examples 1, 3, 4, 6, for illustrations from last year's data collection for all parts of Q10.

RATING:

EFF Field Development Reporting Form 2000-2001

Q10A1. How does this knowledge compare to the "knowledge required for the task" described in Q7C? **Review what you wrote in Q7C about knowledge base requirements of the task, and your response to Q10 A. Did the learner have and use all the knowledge necessary to accomplish the task? If not, what was missing? What does the learner still need to work on?**

• **Q10B.** How well did the learner use the skill described in the standard?

• **Q10B1.** Description of fluency or ease of learner's performance:

RATING:

• **Q10B2.** Description of independence of learner's performance:

RATING:

• **Q10C.** Did the learner perform the task that was described in Q7A-C?

_____ Yes _____ No

If no, please answer the following questions:

• **Q10C1:** In what ways was the task that the learner actually performed different from that described in Q7A-C?

• **Q10C2.** Overall numerical rating of the task that the learner actually performed:

• **Q10D.** Other comments on learner performance relative to the standard or to the task:

REFLECTION AND EVALUATION

The reflection and evaluation questions on this year's form are not the same as last year's. For examples of the ways that teachers wrote in this section, see Examples 3, 4, 9, and 10, Section 7.

• **Q11A.** Think back over the process of developing the performance task described in this report. Describe the extent to which the task template helps you in developing performance tasks.

•**Q11B.** How did the process of rating the task go for you? Did your team agree with your initial rating? Was it difficult to come to consensus on a rating? Describe:

• **Q12.** Think about the teaching and learning process that has been taking place. What is different from the way you usually teach? Is there a change in what is happening with your students?

• **Q13A.** Think about the process of describing and rating student performance described in this report. Did the performance template help you observe and document what learners know more effectively? How? If not, why?

• **Q13B.** Does the performance template help you compare one performance to another?

• **Q14.** Think about the whole process of planning, teaching and documenting performance around a performance task. How did it work for you? Did you find it useful? Difficult?Challenging? What else? Please give us your honest and candid thoughts.

• **Q15.** Other comments:

Excerpts from a data reporting form on a task developed for READ WITH UNDERSTANDING

NRS Program Term: ESL
NRS Level: high intermediate/low advanced
Program Setting: community college

• **%Q6.** Provide a rich, detailed description of the task that requires use of the identified EFF standard, by answering questions Q6A-D below:

• **%Q6A.** Provide a clear, succinct statement of the task.

Students will read newspaper classified ads advertising apartments for rent in their community. They will identify the necessary information to answer questions they have previously formulated in class.

• **%Q6B.** In questions Q6B1 and Q6B2 below, describe the meaningful use and transfer value of this task.

• **%Q6B1.** Explain how the task represents a meaningful, real-world use of the standard.

Students have expressed a concern about being able to find good, affordable housing. This task will help students better understand when reading rental housing classified ads, and thus be able to use the classified ads as a resource when searching for housing.

• **%Q6B2.** Explain how students can apply in other situations (transfer) what they will learn by carrying out this task.

Through this task students will gain a better understanding of the vocabulary, language, and abbreviations associated with classified ads. It is hoped that they will be able to use the classified ads in searching not only for rental housing, but other things as well (i.e. furniture, childcare, employment).

• **%Q6C.** Explain how this task requires learners to address each component of the Standard. Determine the reading purpose:

Students have already determined the purpose for reading in previous learning activities. In class discussions students have addressed questions such as "What are the classified ads? How can they help me find housing?" Etc. They have also identified what information would be important to know when looking for rental housing, and have formulated questions to find out this information.

Select reading strategies appropriate to the purpose:

When reading the classified ads for rental housing, students will need to select reading strategies such as scanning and reading for details to be able to find the information to answer the questions (i.e., scanning—when looking at classified ads section titles, reading for details—looking for specific information such as amount of deposit and services included in the rent).

Monitor comprehension and adjust reading strategies:

Students will search for the necessary information to answer the questions and record their answers on a student-generated worksheet. Students will adjust their reading strategies until they are able to find the answers to these questions. Such adjustments may include using a dictionary, asking another student or the instructor for help, determining meaning from context, etc.

Analyze the information and reflect on its underlying meaning:

Students will record the answers to the questions on a student-generated worksheet. By doing this they will determine what important information is given in the ad, and also what important information is missing.

Integrate it with prior knowledge to address reading purpose:

The questions are evidence of the students' prior knowledge regarding rental housing classified ads. Students are integrating prior knowledge with new

Excerpts from a data reporting form on a task developed for READ WITH UNDERSTANDING

knowledge by finding the answers to the questions, and determining what important information is missing from the ads.

• **%Q6D.** Explain what evidence you will look at to see how well the standard was used to carry out the task.

When reading the classified ads, students will look for answers to questions they have previously formulated in class. They will then record their answers on a student-generated worksheet. Their answers will be evidence of how well the standard was used to carry out the task.

RATING THE TASK

• **%Q7.** Use the task template to describe and provide a numerical rating for each dimension of the task, below:

• **%Q7A.** Complexity of the task

Describe: The task is multi-stepped. It includes asking questions, reading, writing (recording answers), and analyzing. There is some teacher guidance and structure; however, the students themselves must formulate and answer the questions.

RATING: 35

• **%Q7B.** The context in which this task will take place

Describe: The task takes place in two contexts: 1) the classroom, and 2) the newspaper. The classroom is familiar, and the newspaper is somewhat familiar.

RATING: 31

• **%Q7C.** What is the knowledge required for the task? Describe below, 7C1-3.

• **%Q7C1.** Vocabulary needed, related to the skill and to the subject area

DESCRIBE: Skill: 1. Vocabulary related to asking and answering questions (i.e., how, what, how much, where, etc.) 2. Vocabulary related to reading strategies (i.e., pre-reading, scanning, detail, etc.) 3. Vocabulary related to analyzing (i.e., information, relevant, important, missing, etc.)

SUBJECT AREA: 1. General vocabulary related to housing (i.e. rent, apartment, house, contract, amenities, etc.) 2.Vocabulary specific to a newspaper (i.e., classified ads, sections, etc.) 3. Vocabulary specific to rental housing classified ads. This also includes abbreviations (i.e. deposit, amenities, services included in rent, W/S/G, W/D, etc.) 4. Vocabulary specific to housing assistance programs in their community (i.e., Housing Authority, Section 8, Public Housing, voucher, EHO, etc.)

RATING: 37

• **%Q7C2.** Content knowledge needed, related to the skill and to the subject area

DESCRIBE: Skill: Ability to read in English; intermediate level of English comprehension; understanding of different reading strategies; ability to formulate and answer questions; understanding of the concept of abbreviations; ability to determine important/relevant information; and ability to think abstractly when determining what important/ relevant information is missing.

SUBJECT AREA: General understanding of the rental housing process in the United States; understanding of a newspaper and where to locate the classified ads; understanding of how to use the classified ads (i.e. classification of different ads, responding to want ads, etc.); and understanding of the vocabulary, language, and abbreviations associated with rental housing classified ads.

RATING: 39

• **%Q7C3.** Strategies needed for organizing and applying the content knowledge

DESCRIBE: Strategies needed include the ability to: Determine what is important/relevant information, classify and categorize information, think abstractly (to determine what information is missing), understand the "intended" meaning in addition to the literal meaning (inferences), record and restate information, link new knowledge to previous knowledge, and understand cultural protocols and ability to implement them.

RATING: 39

Excerpts from a data reporting form on a task developed for READ WITH UNDERSTANDING

OVERALL TASK RATING

• **%Q8.** Provide a numerical rating of the overall task, within a five point range. Explain why you rated the task here, including the weighting (if any) of specific dimensions.

OVERALL RATING: 35 - 40

REASONS: I felt that this task should rate in the upper 30's because it requires the students to think abstractly as they determine what information is missing. Also, it requires the students to understand inferences.

TEACHING/IMPLEMENTING

In Question 9, write about the learning activities that you and your students have been engaged in, to prepare for and perform the task described above.

1. JOURNAL — "Describe your home. How big is it? What color is it? How did you find your home?" This opened up a discussion about the different resources students use for finding housing. This led to a discussion about the classified ads. Students expressed some of their frustrations when trying to read the classified ads.
2. DISCUSSION — What are the classified ads? What do you already know about the classified ads? What do you not understand when using the classified ads? Students discussed their experiences using the classified ads to buy things. They talked about the importance of being able to understand the language of the classified ads.
3. JOURNAL — "Describe your 'dream house.' What would it look like? Where would it be located?" This opened up a discussion about vocabulary related to housing. From there we discussed vocabulary and abbreviations used in classified ads for rental housing. Students then determined what information would be important to know when looking for rental housing.
4. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT — Students wrote questions to find out the information they previously determined to be important information when looking for rental housing. They were informed that we would use these questions in an exercise practicing reading classified ads for rental housing.
5. DISCUSSION — The class discussed their experience with the homework assignment of writing questions. They talked about what other information might be important to know when looking for rental housing. This led to a discussion about American culture and the protocols and expectations when renting in the United States.

DATE OF COMPLETION OF PERFORMANCE TASK: March 12, 2001

OBSERVATIONS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Answer the following questions about learner performance of the task described in Q6 and Q7. Use the Observation Worksheets and Performance Template as your guide for describing performance and rating performance.

• **%Q10** STUDENT 1: JC *[Full report includes performance data for two more students]*

• **%Q10A.** What does the learner know that allowed him/her to carry out the task as s/he did? Description of vocabulary, content knowledge and strategies for organizing and applying content knowledge:

JC understands vocabulary related to asking questions (i.e., how, what, where, when, etc.) She demonstrated this understanding in the homework assignment of writing questions to inquire about an apartment for rent as well as in our class discussions.

She understands the concept of reading strategies and has much experience with this as she has a college degree from her native country. Although she understands and can do "scanning" and "reading for detail," she lacks some of the English vocabulary to express the idea. This was evident in some of the class discussions when she asked for clarification of the meanings of some of these words (i.e. scanning). She, however, easily used different reading strategies in her work.

Once again she understands the concepts of analyzing, and was able to analyze, but lacks some of the English vocabulary. She asked for clarification of the meanings of these words (i.e., relevant).

She understands general vocabulary related to housing as she is currently renting an apartment

Excerpts from a data reporting form on a task developed for READ WITH UNDERSTANDING

(i.e., rent, deposit, house, apartment, contract).

She understands some vocabulary related to the newspaper as she reads the newspaper daily in class. She is able to identify different sections of the newspaper and navigates well within the newspaper. She was able to identify the classified ads section without any difficulty.

She has enough vocabulary specific to rental housing to be able to ask and answer questions (i.e., deposit, rent, contract, lease). However, some of the regional vocabulary was new to her (i.e., porch vs. patio vs. deck, utility room, trailer vs. mobile home vs. manufactured home). The abbreviations were new to her and she asked several questions regarding abbreviations.

She was unfamiliar with the vocabulary specific to housing assistance programs in the community. The concept of housing assistance was also new to her as she commented that such programs are not available in her native country. During class discussions she had several questions regarding housing assistance in the U.S.

RATING: 40

• **%Q10A1.** How does this knowledge compare to the "knowledge required for the task" described in Q7C?

JC's knowledge was sufficient and even above what was required for the task. This was demonstrated in her ability, ease, and quality of work in completing the task. She lacked some of the technical vocabulary needed, but was able to learn it.

• **%Q10B.** How well did the learner use the skill described in the standard?

JC used the skills described in the standard very well. She was able to determine reading purpose as she participated in class discussions. She was able to adjust her reading strategies as needed to help her understanding. I observed her use her dictionary, ask others for clarification, and relate new information to what she already knew (i.e., "Oh, that is like..."). She was able to analyze information and determine relevant information as well as determine what information was missing. This was evident in her answers on the worksheet. She was able to make inferences when determining missing information and also able to determine cause and effect (i.e., "This apartment includes electricity and water, therefore, the rent must be higher."). Also, that she was able to formulate questions inquiring about an apartment for rent, was evidence of prior knowledge. She was also able to understand humor during class discussions about rental housing. For example, when discussing the homework assignment to ask questions, one of the questions was related to the number of kids allowed. One student said, "Do you allow kids as well as horses?" She indicated that she understood the humor—that kids are also baby goats.

• **%Q10B1.** Description of fluency or ease of learner's performance:

This task did not seem to require much effort from JC. She appeared to easily adjust reading strategies as needed and was able to analyze information. In my observations she moved easily from one part of the task to another. She was one of the first students to complete the task.

RATING: 55

• **%Q10B2.** Description of independence of learner's performance:

JC was able to complete the task without assistance from the instructor. When she was unsure of vocabulary she used her dictionary or asked other students. She demonstrated no difficulty in being able to start and end the task. She was one of the first students to complete the task.

RATING: 61

• **%Q10C.** Did the learner perform the task that was described in Q7A-C?

X Yes ___ No

Please describe the evidence that you have collected:

1. Homework assignment to ask questions to inquire about an apartment for rent.
2. Completed worksheet.
3. Additional questions which were part of the assignment, but not part of the task. Answers to these questions demonstrate an understanding of vocabulary.

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